Like Home

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/36727147.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warnings:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence, Major Character Death
Categories:	F/F, M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham/Mason Verger, Alana Bloom/Margot Verger, Will Graham/Margot Verger, Ardelia Mapp/Clarice Starling
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Mason Verger, Margot Verger, Alana Bloom, Jack Crawford, Abigail Hobbs, Adam Raki, Clarice Starling, Ardelia Mapp, Randall Tier, Nigel (Charlie Countryman)
Additional Tags:	Implied/Referenced Abortion, Forced Abortion, Hannibal Lecter is a Cannibal, Alpha Hannibal Lecter, Omega Will Graham, Alpha Mason Verger, Alpha Margot Verger, Omega Alana Bloom, Minor Alana Bloom/Margot Verger, Hannibal Lecter Loves Will Graham, He wants what's best for Will, really - Freeform, Alpha/Beta/Omega Dynamics, Eventual Happy Ending, Canon-Typical Violence, Murder Husbands, Murder Wives, Male Lactation, Lactation, Breastfeeding
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of To Build a (Cannibal) Home
Stats:	Published: 2022-01-28 Updated: 2024-02-23 Words: 48,356 Chapters: 28/?

Like Home

by Lady_Thunder

Summary

“What are you going to do, Will?”
The omega came closer and something in his movements and the coldness of his eyes reminded Hannibal of a wolf.
“If Mason touches me again, he will learn a lesson his beloved papa never thought to teach him.”
Hannibal swallowed as warm arousal pooled in his lower abdomen. “And what lesson is that, Will?”
The omega closed the distance between them to whisper in the alpha’s ear. “Omega’s can bite.”

OR
Dr. Hannibal Lecter is called in by Mason Verger to take a look at his reluctant omega, Will Graham, and Hannibal decides to help the omega escape so he can be Will's mate instead.

Notes

This is my first Hannigram fic, so I hope people enjoy it! Also, please let me know if I need to adjust the tags. It's been a while since I wrote a fic, so I'm a little rusty :P

Laying the Foundation

Muskrat Farm resembled a country estate Hannibal had once seen but the illusion was shattered by the newness of the bricks and architecture.

Hannibal parked his Bentley and was met at the door by a beta who led him through the estate to the master bedroom. A small room opened off that and Hannibal's nose wrinkled as the doors opened. Blood, sweat, and the sweet scent of unwashed skin, mixed with the aroma of distressed omega and the musk of the alpha kneeling beside the nest.

"Now, don't be difficult, Will," the alpha scolded. "Doctor Lecter has come all this way to see you. If you don't come out and behave for him, I won't give you any chocolate."

Hannibal frowned at the alpha and instantly disliked him. Mason Verger was widely built, yet somehow managed to look small in his tailored suit. His voice had a higher pitch than Hannibal had expected from an alpha and the fact that Mason was kneeling beside the nest was worrisome.

"Will," Mason snapped.

"Mason," Hannibal said, his voice smooth and respectful, "Why don't you let me get to know Will? Forcing him to come out before he's ready won't get you the results you want."

Mason considered that. "Well, you're the doctor, Doctor. Just know that he liked to do this for attention."

Hannibal nodded and Mason left the room. The moment the doors closed, Hannibal dimmed the cold, harsh lights.

"Much better," Hannibal mused, taking Mason's spot at the edge of the nest.

They sat in silence for several seconds, which gave Hannibal time to study the omega's nest. Based on what Hannibal had seen, there wasn't a single article of clothing in the nest that belonged to Mason. The alpha's scent only hung in the air.

"Can Mason see us in here?" Hannibal inquired after a while.

"...No," a hoarse voice replied.

Hoarse from minimal use .

"Good."

"Are you one of Mason's friends?" the voice inquired. There was an edge to the question.

"I'm Margot's psychiatrist and more recently, Mason's."

A dark head of curls appeared from the depths of the nest.

"Hello, Will," Hannibal warmly greeted.

Will's blue eyes regarded Hannibal and the omega sniffed the air. "What are you?"

Hannibal paused. Could the omega smell his alpha scent under the beta cologne he wore? "My scent is a bit unusual, but I am a beta."

Will's eyes narrowed. "Do you know why you're here?"

"I was told that you're not leaving your nest," Hannibal calmly replied.

Will scoffed.

"It's a wonder he called me when the answer was blatantly obvious," Hannibal added.

Will cooked his head with interest.

"I can barely smell your alpha in here and the aroma of blood suggests many reasons as to why."

"But you already know the reason why," Will accused. "You wouldn't have come all the way out here if you didn't."

"The loss of a pup isn't something you should be made to endure alone."

Will scoffed again. "'Loss' is too kind of a word for what Mason did. For any of it."

"What would be a more adept word?" Hannibal prodded.

Will frowned and stood up, giving Hannibal his first good look at him. Will's body was slim, but his hips were wide; ideal for child-bearing. He wore only a well-loved grey t-shirt and a pair of grey boxers. Will lifted the hem of his shirt to expose a curving series of abdominal stitches.

"Taken," Will said coldly, "ripped. Stolen. All of those words are *much* more appropriate."

Hannibal looked up into Will's eyes. "Why would Mason risk hurting you? That he needs a pup is well known."

Will scoffed and sat back down in his nest. "You've answered your own question, doctor."

Hannibal considered the lack of Mason's presence in his omega's nest and the answer came into focus. "This was punishment."

"My pup would have been a Verger," Will nodded. "Just not Mason's. His papa arranged for me to be his, but Mason never paid much attention to me until someone else touched what was his. "

Margot.

"Why didn't she protect you from him?"

Will tugged at the collar of his shirt and Hannibal had to resist closing his eyes to savor the omega's scent. "I'm not hers."

Hannibal focused and visually confirmed that there was no claim mark on Will's skin. "Nor are you Mason's."

"No, I'm not," Will nodded.

"Then why stay?" Hannibal cautiously inquired.

"And go where?" Will challenged.

Hannibal frowned. "You a have no resources."

"I'm an omega," Will reminded. "Even if I was financially independent, I'm not exactly twenty-one anymore. Not many alphas want an omega who's pushing forty."

"Some alphas might like having a mature mate," Hannibal said. His eyes swiftly studied Will's body again. A softening belly could be seen pressing against Will's shirt; the perfect palace for a pup to nuzzle. Or a doting mate. Soft thighs for a pup to sit on. Or a mate to grab hold of to kiss or bruise or bite. Hannibal forced himself to look back up at Will's eyes.

"So they'd say," Will dismissed, "but all alphas want to do is breed."

"Breeding should be a result of mutual desire, not a convenience of biology between two mates," Hannibal asserted.

Will scoffed, "You're a beta; what do you know?"

Hannibal frowned.

"Unless, you aren't a beta," Will prompted. He sniffed the air and closed his eyes. "You hide your scent well, especially since you're unmated."

Hannibal's eyes darkened. He didn't like how easily this omega had discovered his secret.

"Why is that?" Will added in a tone of curiosity.

"The opportunity for mating never presented itself," Hannibal deflected.

"What about now?"

Hannibal studied Will's face.

"Would you take a mate now? You said yourself that some alphas like older mates. Or were you speaking in more general terms?"

"This isn't about me, Will," Hannibal reminded. "This is about you and Mason."

Will gave him a disgusted look. "Mason will whisper filth into my ear then lock me away when my heat comes. He's…unfit to be my alpha."

“What are you going to do, Will?”

The omega came closer and something in his movements and the coldness of his eyes reminded Hannibal of a wolf.

“If Mason touches me again, he will learn a lesson his beloved papa never thought to teach him.”

Hannibal swallowed as warm arousal pooled in his lower abdomen. “And what lesson is that, Will?”

The omega closed the distance between them to whisper in the alpha’s ear. “Omega’s can bite.”

Hannibal suppressed a shudder. The omega was having a greater effect on him than he’d anticipated.

Will smiled and nuzzled at Hannibal’s throat. Hannibal closed his eyes and inhaled the omega’s scent as Will breathed in the alpha’s musk. The two men sighed in contentment and mild arousal; at last, someone who smelled like home. Like a future. Like a mate.

“Take me away from here, doctor,” Will breathed.

“I can’t, Will.”

“You could,” Will insisted. “You want to.”

Hannibal forced himself to pull away. “Mason could press charges and you would be returned to him.”

“The police would return me to my mate,” Will corrected.

Clever boy.

“I haven’t taken a mate for multiple reasons,” Hannibal said, “not least among which is that I have rather refined tastes. Not every omega is suited to those eccentricities.”

“I’ve survived here, haven’t I?” Will mused.

Hannibal smiled, “Yes, you have.”

“Am I not pleasing to you?” Will pressed, nuzzling Hannibal’s neck.

“You’re reaching for a lifeline, Will and I am a passing boat in a storm.”

Will kissed Hannibal’s jaw and the alpha grabbed his shoulders. Dark brown eyes, full of possessive desire met blue eyes demanding release.

“I can’t stay here,” Will asserted.

“An effective escape would require careful planning,” Hannibal intoned.

Will caressed Hannibal's cheek. "You're more than capable, doctor."

A low purr of approval resonated in Hannibal's throat. His alpha nature demanded that he protect this omega and they both knew it. It was an obvious manipulation, but one that was hard to ignore.

"Alpha," Will breathed in Hannibal's ear, "please."

No omega had ever been able to persuade Hannibal Lecter. He prided himself on being immune to their baser charms. If he was to take a mate, he'd told himself that it would take more than a pretty face, wide hips, and plush lips to convince him. And yet, when Will Graham whispered in his ear and gave him a pleading look, Hannibal's alpha yielded. In that moment, his mind was set; Will Graham would be his omega. *His* . His alone.

"Such a cunning boy," Hannibal praised.

Will's body relaxed and he rested his head against Hannibal's shoulder. "Would you want a pup?"

"I have always been drawn to the idea of being a father," Hannibal admitted.

Will smiled and rested a hand on Hannibal's other shoulder.

"Will."

"Just for a moment."

Hannibal indulged him.

Will slowly pushed himself away from Hannibal and the alpha's eyes caught a bright spot of color disappearing into the nest.

The doors behind Hannibal suddenly opened and the scent of Hannibal's rival filled his nostrils. Will retreated into his nest, eyes low.

"Well, doctor? Did he behave himself?"

Hannibal smoothed his suit. "Yes. We had a nice chat and I believe we've laid some groundwork."

"Excellent," Mason smiled, putting a hand on Hannibal's shoulder.

Hannibal forced himself to nod and make small talk with Mason as the other alpha steered him out of the nest room.

"Maybe you should come by again in the next few days," Mason suggested as they neared the exit closest to Hannibal's car.

"I think that would be in your omega's best interest." Hannibal offered a few days and times and they decided Hannibal should return in two days.

Hannibal climbed into his car and as he buckled his seatbelt he noticed that his pocket square was missing. He sat for a moment and hurried through the halls of his memory palace to the new wing being built for Will Graham.

Cunning boy indeed.

Hannibal smirked as he fully recognized what colorful thing had disappeared into Will's nest. The crafty omega had stolen his pocket square.

Cornerstones

Chapter Summary

Hannibal returns to Muskrat Farm where he meets Margot in the stables and learns more about her and Will's motivations. Armed with that information, Hannibal begins to set things in motion to make Will his.

Chapter Notes

Another chapter? What's this??
I think I'll try to update on Fridays/ Saturdays (maybe both).

Two days passed and Hannibal drove out to Muskrat Farm again. As he pulled up the drive, he spotted a woman riding a horse to the stables. She turned her head and Hannibal recognized her as Margot Verger. He parked the Bentley and followed her into the stables.

“Good morning, Margot,” Hannibal greeted.

She looked up from her horse. “Doctor Lecter. Here to see my brother?”

“Here to see Will.”

Margot frowned. “Surprised Mason didn’t call you.”

“Is something the matter?” Hannibal’s heart pounded.

“Today isn’t a good day,” Margot explained. “Don’t be disappointed if Mason tells you to leave.”

“A good day for whom?”

“Will.”

Hannibal’s eyebrows contracted minutely.

“...He really wanted the pup,” Margot whispered. “There are days when he gets melancholy about it.”

“That’s to be expected.”

Margot sighed. “Did he tell you?”

“That you were the sire?”

Margot nodded.

“Yes, Will told me,” Hannibal coldly replied.

“I’m not proud of what I did, or of what happened to Will,” Margot assured him. “We both just wanted a way out.”

“Why are you so desperate?”

Margot raised an eyebrow at him. “My father was a dick and named Mason as the sole beneficiary of the family fortune and major holdings. Will’s male pups would inherit after Mason’s passing and in the absence of a male Verger heir, everything would go to the church.”

Hannibal was impressed. “You took advantage of a loophole.”

“Father liked to forget he sired two alphas after he learned of my proclivities for certain parts.”

“One would think gender is more incidental when our sexes are so varied.”

“One would think,” Margot agreed. “But father was a dick.”

Hannibal smirked.

“You should get going.”

“It was nice to see you, Margot.”

She nodded and went to put her horse away while Hannibal made his way back to the house.

“Doctor Lecter,” Mason greeted. “I saw your car, but not you.”

“My attention was caught by your horses,” Hannibal explained.

“I didn’t think you were a horse man.”

“I simply appreciate beauty.”

Mason nodded. “Well, at least you got to see something. Will is being difficult today, so you won’t get far with him. Might need to reschedule.”

“More difficult than the other day?” Hannibal prompted.

“Oh, the other day was a cakewalk compared to this! I don’t know what to do with him when he gets like this. He won’t let me into the room, let alone near the nest.” Mason took a step

closer and leaned in conspiratorially. “You know, I think he blames me for what happened to his pup. Sad, really. The only person he has to blame is himself.”

“After driving all the way out here, it would be a shame to not at least try,” Hannibal insisted, ignoring Mason’s twisting of events.

“I suppose you’re right, doctor,” Mason sighed. “I am paying you handsomely to drive out here.”

Hannibal nodded and Mason led him to the nest room.

“Will,” Mason called, knocking loudly, “Doctor Lecter is here to see you.” When he received no response, Mason motioned for Hannibal to go in.

The lights were on but there was no sign of Will. Hannibal sniffed the air and confirmed that the omega was hidden in his nest.

“Will.”

“You came,” Will’s voice replied. Melancholy filled his voice, but there was also a note of relief.

Hannibal approached the nest. “I did. I ran into Margot on the way in. She mentioned you were not doing well today.”

“Come here?”

Hannibal hesitated.

“Please?”

Hannibal removed his shoes and suit jacket before stepping into the nest. It had been washed since his last visit which made Will’s lonesome scent more obvious.

Hannibal sat down and waited. A moment later, Will crawled out from under a heap of blankets and he rested his curly head in Hannibal’s lap.

“Alpha.”

“Shhh…” Hannibal soothed, petting Will’s curls.

Will quieted and nuzzled Hannibal’s leg.

“Will.”

“Call me what I am.”

“You aren’t mine, Will,” Hannibal reminded.

Will scoffed. “I don’t even know you and you feel more like my alpha than Mason ever has.”

“I treat you with the respect you deserve,” Hannibal agreed.

“Mason doesn’t treat me with any respect,” Will returned, touching his belly.

Hannibal continued to pet Will’s curls.

“...It wasn’t a pup. Not yet,” Will whispered. “It was the *idea* of a pup, but it was mine.”

“Would you have been able to keep hold of it?” Hannibal gently prodded. “Or would Margot have taken custody?”

“We’d planned for her to have primary custody,” Will mumbled, “but...after I learned I was pregnant, I decided I wanted more than that.”

Sweet boy. You deserve a pup of your own.

“And what of Mason?”

“Margot was going to take care of that. She deserved that after everything he’d done to her.”

Hannibal nodded. “And now?”

“Now, I want to do it myself.”

“How?”

“...With my hands. “

Hannibal growled in approval and Will looked up at him.

“That would be a sight to see,” Hannibal praised.

Will nuzzled Hannibal’s hand. “You’re an unusual alpha.”

“I agree with many of the ancients,” Hannibal mused. “The omega is divine.”

Will cocked his head at him.

“An omega should be treated with the respect of a sacred object,” Hannibal elaborated.”

“Worshipped from afar?”

“Given every courtesy and respect,” Hannibal corrected. “An alpha should prepare a place for their omega to nest in safety and plenty of materials with which to build it. The omega’s comfort should be their alpha’s primary concern.”

Will’s eyes shone. “...I would be a good omega for you.”

“I know you would, Will.”

“You do?”

Hannibal nodded. “You’ve made a good nest and you’re still adding to it to make it a calming space for you.”

Will’s cheeks pinked.

“Tell me, Will,” Hannibal said, “why did you risk Mason’s wrath by bringing my scent into your nest?”

“It was only a pocket square,” Will defended.

“It carries my scent.”

Will sat up. “Your scent was more comforting to me than anything else I’ve been given in three years!”

“...Is that how long you’ve been here?”

“Yes.”

You’re very strong, Will Graham.

“...I wanted something with your scent so my nest would feel safer,” Will mumbled.

“An understandable desire, Will, but you were reckless,” Hannibal said. “Mason has proven that ownership of you matters more to him than your wellbeing. If Mason had caught my scent in your nest, he could have cancelled our appointment and kept me from you.”

Will sniffed. “...I know.”

Hannibal knew he was being hypocritical; he was sitting in Will’s nest, but if Will really wanted to be free of Mason, he couldn’t make mistakes like that again.

“It won’t happen again,” Will promised.

“There’s a good boy,” Hannibal gently praised. “Now, dry your tears and let’s go for a walk.”

“A walk?”

“Yes. You are allowed to walk the grounds, are you not?”

Will nodded.

Hannibal helped Will to his feet and Will quickly threw a flannel over his shirt and pulled on a pair of jeans.

Will hadn’t been out of his nest for long periods of time for a while, so his legs were a bit unsteady as they walked, but Hannibal offered his arm for support. As they walked, Hannibal surveyed the estate and the security measures in place.

“Will, do you think Mason would allow you to come to my office?”

The omega thought for a moment. “He might, if you made him think it was his idea.”

Hannibal nodded. He liked how manipulative Will could be.

He might make a good mate for me after all.

They turned towards the house and caught sight of Mason walking towards them. Hannibal felt Will’s grip on his arm tighten.

“Ah, Will, out and about I see,” Mason commented. “Seems Dr. Lecter is doing you some good.”

Will nodded.

“I was just telling Will something similar,” Hannibal agreed.

“It’s almost miraculous,” Mason nodded. “And, being a keen student of the Bible, I should know.”

“Who are we to dispute a miracle?” Hannibal replied.

“Who indeed,” Mason mused.

Hannibal took a moment before continuing so his words appeared more spontaneous. “Will could benefit from the therapy I offer in my office. I think it would help to continue the miracle you’ve already seen in him.”

Mason thought loudly to himself before agreeing. “You are the doctor, Doctor.”

Will’s eyes shone with excitement. “Thank you!”

The two alphas looked at him.

“...Thank you, alpha,” Will said more meekly. “I want to get better.”

“Of course you do,” Mason cooed.

Hannibal could smell Will’s distress. “Why don’t you go back inside? Mason and I have a few things to discuss.”

Will glanced at Mason.

“Go ahead,” Mason dismissed. “Don’t worry your little omega mind about this.”

Hannibal’s eyes darkened at the patronizing tone and Will retreated into the house. The two alphas watched him go.

“A beautiful omega, don’t you think, Doctor?” Mason commented.

“A fine omega for someone like you.”

Mason nodded. “Yes, I think my father did a good job when he chose Will. He had an eye for a good omega, my father. He could take one look and know which would be good breeding stock. Which is why the family accepted Will as my mate despite his lack of pedigree. Pity any pups of his will be mutts. He has some good genes.”

Hannibal was accustomed to thinking of humans as animals. Very few humans *weren’t* animals in his eyes, but the way Mason described Will as if he were a Verger sow left a bad taste in Hannibal’s mouth.

“You speak of your father very highly,” Hannibal commented. “Is that why he selected your mate for you?”

“I trusted his judgement on the matter,” Mason confirmed.

“A father’s judgement is no foundation for a man’s courtship with his mate.”

Mason considered that for several moments. “No, you’re right, Doctor. I value Will because father picked him out for me. He’s a good choice, but...I’ve never really seen Will as my mate. He’s pretty enough, but not quite my type.”

Hannibal nodded encouragingly.

“Would it..? Would it be an insult to my father’s memory if I...let Will go?”

Hannibal stopped in his tracks. Was this going to be easier than he’d predicted? “I don’t see why it would be if the two of you aren’t a good match. If you are to continue the Verger legacy, you need a good mate at your side.”

“Verger pups deserve a pedigree,” Mason nodded. “But what about Will? I suppose someone would take him. Wouldn’t they?”

“Omegas are reformed with some frequency,” Hannibal affirmed. “There’s no shame in it.”

“I’ll consider it.”

“Of course, it is a decision not to be made lightly,” Hannibal encouraged.

“You’re a wise beta, Doctor Lecter.”

Hannibal accepted Mason’s praise and made his excuses to leave. As Hannibal drove back to Baltimore, he considered the events of the day carefully.

Even if Mason releases Will, there’s still the clause about Will’s pups to worry about. I would need to read the exact wording, but if his father specified Will by name, Mason might back out. Convincing him that his father only named Will because Will was Mason’s mate is a viable argument, but that will all depend upon Mason’s temperament.

When Hannibal returned to his home, he walked into a room he’d only been in a few times. His house was a historic one, so a heat room - or nest room, as they were now called - was part of the design.

Hannibal opened the double doors and studied the room with the eye of an expectant alpha. In the middle of the room was a traditional nestbox; a large wooden cube with a spherical indent in the middle. A section of the cube was cut away from the indent, which allowed the omega to crawl into the frame and use the underneath space to store spare blankets, food, clothing, and other personal belongings. A floor heater (which Hannibal had refurbished) kept the nestbox warm when desired. The design had some issues due to when it was made, but it was the nestbox Hannibal had to offer.

Hannibal ascended the built in stairs and carefully climbed into the sloping dome indent. He laid down and found that it wasn't as uncomfortable as it appeared. A few pillows and blankets would help, but that was an easy enough fix. Hannibal looked up and noticed that the architect had purposefully placed a domed ceiling above the nestbox so that when an omega was laying it it, the two dome halves made a visual sphere.

I should paint something on the ceiling for Will.

With that idea in his head, Hannibal climbed out of the nestbox, put his shoes and jacket back on before going to his study to sketch out a few ideas.

Scaffolding

Chapter Summary

> Hannibal goes shopping for blankets and pillows to fill Will's new nest and continues to manipulate Mason. Will is getting frustrated with Hannibal's caution and tries to make a move.

Chapter Notes

> Tags got updated - nothing too major, but they got updated!
> Clarice Starling and Ardelia Mapp decided to make a cameo in this. They might come back later, but they'll be very minor to the story as a whole.

Mason called the next day saying that he would be out of town during Will's next session with Hannibal.

"You had mentioned something about Will coming to your office," Mason continued, "but I don't think that will be possible this week. I don't like the idea of Will leaving the house when I'm not around."

Hannibal frowned into the phone. This would have been the perfect opportunity for him to get Will away from Mason. "I could always come out to Muskrat Farm," he offered.

"Well now, that is an idea," Mason mused.

Hannibal waited.

Let him think he's still in control of what's going to happen.

"I suppose there's no harm in letting you come by," Mason decided. "You are only a beta."

Hannibal's lips pulled back from his long teeth.

"Come by at the regular time tomorrow. I will tell Cordell to expect you."

After Mason hung up, Hannibal paced his office like an animal in a cage as the urge to kill Mason and cook up his organ rose.

Serving him to Will would make an excellent first meal.

Hannibal marched into his memory palace's kitchen and he began to look through the recipes that he kept stored there. This had a calming effect and sated Hannibal's desire for the time being. He needed to know which pieces of meat to leave unharmed.

As Hannibal exited his memory palace, he realized his phone was ringing again and he answered it. It was his only patient for the day, calling in sick. Normally, Hannibal would consider such a late cancellation rude, but his patient sounded awful, so he made an exception.

With his day suddenly open, Hannibal decided that he needed to purchase some bedding for the nestbox. He didn't want to be unprepared when he finally brought Will home. Hannibal had noticed a locally owned nest supply store a few blocks away, so he decided to see if they were worth supporting.

The day was nice, so Hannibal decided to walk and easily spotted the stylized script on the store window; Once Upon a Nest. A bell *tinged* pleasantly as Hannibal stepped into the store and he found that it was larger than he'd expected. The space wasn't wide, which accounted for his misconception of its size, but rather deep with a small second floor.

A fifteen-year-old omega sat behind the counter. She had shoulder-length brown hair pulled into a half-up, half-down hairstyle. When she greeted Hannibal, he noticed she spoke with a West Virginia accent.

"If you need any help, don't be afraid to ask," she added.

Hannibal systematically wandered the narrow store and found that their products were of surprisingly good quality. Nothing looked cheaply made, in fact, Hannibal noted that many of the products were handmade. Blankets and pillows dominated the ground floor displays while comfort items and onesies for pups were held on the second floor.

Hannibal mentally selected a few blankets before walking over to the counter. The omega looked up from the textbook she was reading and gave him a polite smile. Hannibal noticed her nametag read 'Clarice'.

"Can I help you with anything?" she asked.

"I would like some recommendations," Hannibal replied. "I'm helping to rehome an omega and I want to provide a good nest for him."

Clarice's face softened. "That's really kind of you." She slid off the stool she'd been sitting on and walked around the counter. "Most alphas don't think about stuff like that."

"I always strive to take the needs of an omega into consideration, especially in this case."

Clarice nodded and showed Hannibal to the blankets he'd already mentally selected. "These are some of my favorites. The texture feels nice and they're warm, but not so much that they're unbearable during a heat."

Hannibal noticed that her cheeks warmed as she said that.

“I’d also recommend the body pillows we offer,” Clarice quickly added.

Hannibal nodded and let her show him which ones she liked best.

“All of our products are handmade by local omegas and many use natural or sustainable methods.”

“I prefer to use natural items whenever necessary,” Hannibal mused.

Clarice nodded. “Do you know if the omega has a comfort item?”

Hannibal searched Will’s nest in his memory palace. “I haven’t seen one in the omega’s current nest.”

Clarice led him upstairs and showed him their collection of comfort items. Teddy bears, bunny rabbits, elephants, and kittens dominated the display, but none of them struck Hannibal as something Will would like. Then, something caught his eye behind one of the elephant’s ears. He moved the elephant aside and found a stag made of soft navy fabric.

“Oh! I didn’t realize we still had those,” Clarice commented.

Hannibal tucked the stag under his arm and told Clarice that he was ready to make his purchases. “Would you be able to hold my purchases? I walked from my office and I won’t be able to walk back with everything.”

“I can hold them until the end of the day,” Clarice confirmed. While she rang up Hannibal’s purchases, he paid more attention to the textbook she’d been reading.

“Homework?”

Clarice smiled guiltily. “I’m taking a lot of AP classes this semester so I can graduate early.”

“Eager to get out into the world?”

“I want to graduate so I can get a full-time job for a year or two to help save up for college,” Clarice explained. “I want to get a psychology degree and college is expensive.”

Hannibal liked the young omega’s ambition and drive, so he handed her his business card. “Should you need a letter of reference, you are welcome to contact me.”

Clarice’s eyes widened and she nearly dropped his card on the counter. “Thank you.”

Hannibal walked back to his office and spent the rest of the day sketching mural ideas for the dome above Will’s nest with the plush stag watching him.

When he returned to Once Upon a Nest, Clarice was talking to an African-American girl about her age. From their body language, Hannibal deduced that this was Clarice’s girlfriend.

“You must be Doctor Lecter,” the young alpha greeted. “I’m Ardelia Mapp.”

“A pleasure to meet you.”

“Is that a 2000s Bentley Arnage? Clarice inquired excitedly.

Ardelia rolled her eyes affectionately. “She’s a car buff. I’ll get your stuff while she grills you.”

Clarice gently swatted at her girlfriend’s arm while a warm blush came over her cheeks.

“I’m happy to share my knowledge with someone who appreciates it,” Hannibal said.

Ardelia walked back into the shop while Clarice came closer to examine Hanibal’s car. He answered a few of her questions before Ardelia came back out with two blankets stuffed under each arm.

“Where do you want these?”

Hannibal opened the passenger-side door to the backseat. “In here will do. I don’t want you to risk getting hurt while loading the trunk.”

“The backseat is huge!” Clarice commented.

“Why don’t you load Dr. Lecter’s purchases when I bring them out?” Ardelia offered. “That way you can get a better look.”

Clarice blushed again, but the system worked well and it wasn’t long before everything had been loaded.

“Thank you for your help, Ardelia,” Hannibal said.

“No problem.”

“You should bring your omega by some time,” Clarice suggested.

“I think he would like that,” Hannibal replied.

Ardelia nudged Clarice. “Just remember to do your job and not drool all over the car next time.”

Clarice glared at her and got a playful smile in return.

Hannibal said his goodbyes and drove back home where he instantly threw the blankets into the wash to get Ardelia’s scent off them. Once everything was dry, Hannibal carried the warm blankets into the nest room and arranged the nestbox to his liking. It was beginning to look like a real nest now, all it needed was Will.

Hannibal made himself dinner and went about his evening routine. He skipped his evening shower and crawled naked into the nestbox so he could scent it while he slept.

The next morning, Hannibal crawled out of the nest and showered. He had contemplated if dampening his scent with a shower would be necessary with Mason gone but ultimately decided that it would be safer for Will if he still presented as a beta.

The drive up was pleasant and Cordell, a husky alpha, led him to the nest room. Will was sitting up in the nest when Hannibal entered and Cordell closed the doors behind him.

“Hello, Will.”

“I wasn’t sure if he’d let you come today,” Will said, rushing towards him. His arms were around Hannibal before the alpha knew what was happening.

“I can be rather persuasive,” Hannibal mused, rubbing Will’s back.

Will melted into his touch. “Come into the nest with me.”

“You like danger, don’t you, Will?” Hannibal mused, allowing Will to pull him along.

Compared to what Hannibal had bought, Will’s current nest was shabby. The blankets were threadbare and the sunken-into-the-floor frame was made of marble, which made the whole nest perpetually cold. Will had tried to counteract that with all the blankets, but that only did so much.

Will rearranged the nest as Hannibal stepped in and as he worked, Hannibal spotted something resembling a ratty pillowcase lingering in Will’s hands.

“What do you have there, Will?”

“Bit,” Will mumbled, offering the item for Hannibal to examine.

The alpha slowly took the ratty object in his hand. It smelled like Will and had clearly been with him for a long time; since childhood, Hannibal theorized.

The item was indeed made from an old pillowcase which was either grey or had darkened to that color from white over the years. A knot had been tied at the top of the pillowcase and two buttons were sewn on to resemble a head and eyes. The pieces of pillowcase above the knot had been cut and sewn to resemble bunny ears but had clearly seen better days.

“This is your comfort item.”

Will nodded. “I couldn’t quite say ‘rabbit’ when I tried to name him, so his name became ‘Bit’. Mama made him.” A faint accent surfaced as Will spoke and it took Hannibal a moment to place it.

“Is that a Louisiana accent?”

Will nodded. “It comes out now and again.” He sat closer to Hannibal so their shoulders brushed.

“Did Mason ask you to hide it?” Hannibal asked, trying to ignore the warmth of Will’s body beside him.

“I’d been working to lose it for a while,” Will replied.

Hannibal frowned. *That wasn’t a ‘no’, dear boy.*

“...Southern accents are considered ‘charming’, but not Cajun accents.”

“ *Parlez-vous français?* ”

Will chuckled. “Not what you would call *français* . You’ve been to Paris, right?”

“I traveled Europe when I was a young man,” Hannibal confirmed.

Will rested his head against Hannibal’s shoulder, taking the alpha by surprise. Something very few people were able to do. “Tell me about it?”

Hannibal adjusted his arm so he could pet Will’s curls. Will’s blue eyes closed and he focused on two things; Hannibal’s musk and the sound of his accented voice as Hannibal began to describe his travels.

“I can see it,” Will whispered at one point. “The palazzo, the art...all of it.”

Hannibal turned his attention to Will; he’d gotten lost in the halls of his memory palace. “Walk me through the halls you’re seeing, Will.”

Will closed his eyes and in a low voice, he began to describe the scenes in his mind with such precise detail that Hannibal could see it too.

“You have a beautiful mind, Will,” Hannibal praised.

“It’s being wasted here,” Will sighed. “Most days...I live in my head.”

Hannibal sat up a bit. “Tell me what you see inside your head, Will?”

Will studied him. “This interests you?”

“You and I are alike, Will,” Hannibal replied. “Our minds contain palaces, vast even by medieval standards. Long halls we can walk down when life becomes maddeningly polite.”

Will sat up and looked into Hannibal’s eyes. “Where do you go?”

“Many places,” Hannibal mused, “but the Norman Chapel is one of my favorites.”

Will studied Hannibal’s face. “Alpha.”

“Will.”

“Call me what I am.”

“You’re not mine.”

“Not yet.”

Hannibal nodded. “Not yet.”

“Is that a lie, Dr. Lecter?”

Hannibal cocked his head.

“Do you tell all your poor omega patients that you’ll save them?” Will accused. “Keep them hopeful while you profit from their alphas?”

Hannibal’s eyes darkened. “You think I am playing a game with you.”

“Are you?”

“If you were to disappear today, Will, he would know I was responsible,” Hannibal sighed. “He would come for you.”

“Are you saying you couldn’t protect me?”

Hannibal frowned. “That’s not what I’m saying, Will. Protecting you wouldn’t be an issue.”

Will climbed onto Hannibal’s lap. The room grew warmer as the two slowly met the other’s eyes.

“You’re a strong alpha,” Will praised. “I know you are.”

“I’m making a place for you, Will,” Hannibal confessed. “A place in my world where you won’t have to live in fear. Everything is ready, but the time is not right. It’s a banquet that must be served on the right occasion.”

“When will the right occasion be, Dr. Lecter?” Will pressed.

Hannibal cups Will’s face, forcing their eyes to meet. “Next week, you’ll be coming to my office for our session. Baltimore is a large enough city that someone could easily lose track of you.”

Will nodded, seeing enough of Hannibal’s plan to be satisfied for the moment. “Tell me about the place you’re preparing for me?”

“I’m designing a mural for the ceiling above your nest,” Hannibal confessed. “But the perfect design is eluding me.”

“You’re a painter?”

“I have many talents, Will.”

The omega chuckled.

“What’s an image that gives you comfort, Will?”

He thought for a moment. “The night sky on a clear night. I would help my father in the boatyards and we’d sleep on the boats we were working on. I’d lay out under the stars and the only constellation I could consistently find was Orion.”

“Not the North Star?”

Will chuckled and shook his head. “No, just Orion. Something about his shape always stood out to me.”

Hannibal considered that and Will leaned in to kiss him. The alpha didn’t stop him. Will’s mouth was warm and Hannibal’s lips parted to take in more of that warmth. Hannibal’s large hands wrapped around Will’s thin waist and pulled their chests flush.

“Hair,” Will moaned against Hannibal’s mouth.

Hannibal slid one hand up Will’s spine and grabbed a handful of curls. Will tilted his head back and let out a low groan. Hannibal’s mouth went to Will’s throat.

“Yes, alpha.”

Hannibal continued to kiss.

“Please.”

“Careful, dear boy,” Hannibal said, “you’re tempting me.”

Will chuckled. “That’s the idea.”

Hannibal nuzzled at the base of Will’s throat and tightened his grip on Will’s curls.

“You can do more,” Will mused.

Hannibal’s free hand grabbed Will’s round ass. The omega moaned and his hips bucked.

“So responsive for me,” Hannibal praised.

Will wrapped his arms around Hannibal’s neck. “Go on?”

“You like having my attention.” Will’s ass was lightly slapped then grabbed, causing the omega to moan loudly. “You like to perform.”

“I do,” Will breathed as he felt his boxers dampen.

Hannibal buried his nose in the crook of Will’s neck. His pants were straining to contain his arousal.

“Do I smell good?” Will mused.

“Yes.”

“Do you want me?”

“Yes.”

“Do you want to fill me?”

Hannibal grunted.

“Knot me?”

“Will,” Hannibal moaned.

“Mark me?”

Hannibal growled possessively. It was taking every shred of self-control he had left to not fulfill his desires.

“I want you to.”

Hannibal looked into Will’s eyes.

“Hannibal.”

The way Will said the alpha’s name should have been a crime. Hannibal pushed Will off his lap to preserve his remaining self-control. “Not here.”

Will’s entire demeanor changed. His eyes softened and a soft whine escaped his lips. Hannibal had to look away as Will crawled towards him. The omega smelled so good and Hannibal’s instincts were screaming at him to bury his knot deep inside the omega’s needy hole but this wasn’t the place. Anyone could walk in at any time and the scent of their coupling would be obvious to everyone who handled the nest as it was washed. Mason would be told and Hannibal wouldn’t be able to protect Will.

“You deserve to be made mine in the nest I’ve built for you,” Hannibal insisted.

Will bowed his head and nodded.

Hannibal touched Will’s cheek. “One more week, Will.”

The omega nodded and was rewarded with a soft kiss.

“I want what’s best for you, Will,” Hannibal affirmed.

“I want to believe that.”

Hannibal studied Will’s eyes. “Do you believe it less because I’m making you wait?”

“It feels like an empty promise.”

Hannibal nodded. “Is that why you sought intimacy with me?”

Will raised an eyebrow. “That’s a clinical way of putting it, doctor.”

“We are social creatures,” Hannibal replied. “The bonds we forge keep us together. You’re worried that the bond I’m offering you is a false one, so you sought to make one of your own.”

“All I have is your word, doctor,” Will reminded. “And while you seem to like someone who keeps his word, words are air; intangible and easily changed.”

Hannibal regarded Will with amusement.

“What?”

“While it is often cruel, I believe in fate as a force which pushes and pulls us throughout our lives,” Hannibal confessed. “In all my years of searching for a mate, I could not have found one more suited to me than you, even if I had created them myself.”

Will’s eyes widened at the alpha’s confession and he bowed his head because he felt the same way. “True mates rarely find each other.”

“But when they do, history has shown that nothing will part them.”

The omega met the alpha’s eyes. “You believe we’re true mates?”

“Yes, Will, I do.”

“Then why not take me with you now? No judge would side against bond between true mates.”

Hannibal cupped Will’s face. “Your place is not ready yet. I want everything to be perfect when I bring you into my home.”

Will’s eyebrows contracted as he analyzed the alpha’s words. A moment later, understanding washed over his face. “You mentioned that you agree with the ancients; that the omega is divine. And a divine being deserves a proper temple before it can be properly worshipped.”

Hannibal nodded.

Will rested his forehead against Hannibal’s. “I expect to be well worshipped.”

“You will be, dear boy.”

Will softly kissed him until the approaching sound of Cordell’s footfalls alerted them that their allotted time was up.

Pests

Chapter Summary

Mason reveals that he hasn't been as unaware of Hannibal's plan to rescue Will.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The door to the nest room opened and Will looked up in confusion. It wasn't dinner time, so who could possibly be coming to visit him? His heart dropped into the pit of his stomach when he saw Mason marching in.

"Alpha," Will greeted, bowing his head submissively. "You're back early."

Mason closed his eyes and sniffed the air. "I never truly left."

Will's heart hammered in his chest.

"I was becoming suspicious of Dr. Lecter's motives, so I decided to test him," Mason continued, squatting at the edge of the nest. "I thought he was working for Margot. A kind of revenge for what I did to you. So, imagine my shock when Cordell told me that the good Doctor Lecter is actually an alpha."

Will kept his eyes low.

"He masked his scent well. I honestly missed it until I walked in here and let me tell you, Will, your nest reeks of unmated alpha."

Will's hands formed fists.

"The scales have fallen away from my eyes, Will, and I see Dr. Lecter's true motives. He's taken a liking to you, and, like King David, he's trying to remove the alpha so he can claim the omega for himself," Mason sneered. "At least you had more modesty than Bathsheba; she was bathing on the roof when David saw her, you were merely laying in your nest."

"What are you going to do?" Will asked.

Mason sat back on his heels. "That's the real question, isn't it, Will? I've tried to punish you, but you just don't learn. I would remove the cause of your temptation, but that won't do me much good. There needs to be a Verger heir. Instead, I'll just have to remove Dr. Lecter."

Will glared at him and Mason laughed.

“Oh, you look adorable!”

“I would reconsider that threat, if I were you, Mason,” Will growled.

Mason laughed again. “Look at you! Trying to be intimidating. You’re an omega, Will; you can’t scare me into submission.”

“I’m not trying to make you submit, Mason,” Will replied. “I’m reminding you of the situation you have found yourself in.”

“Which is?”

“A contest between yourself and Dr. Lecter over who will be my alpha.”

Mason raised his eyebrows in amusement. “Oh, it’s no contest. I’ve already sent someone to deal with Dr. Lecter.”

“You can’t even do it yourself,” Will taunted. “You have to send another alpha.”

Mason slapped him. “Shut your defiant little mouth or I will find another use for it.”

Will’s eyes glittered darkly. “You would regret that.”

Mason grabbed the back of Will’s neck. “Why? All you have are angry words. You’re an omega; you don’t fight. You cower.”

Will leaned in closer. “I think you need a history lesson.”

“Do I?” Mason scoffed.

Will lunged forward and his teeth clamped down on the warm skin of Mason’s cheek. Mason screamed and Will tore at the flesh until a large section came off in his mouth, warm with blood. Mason scrambled away, his eyes wide with horror.

“Spartan omegas would disfigure their alphas if they hurt them,” Will sneered, spitting out the chunk of Mason’s cheek. “Touch me again, and I will do worse.”

Mason stumbled to his feet and ran to the door. “You’ll pay for that!”

Will gave him a bloody smile before Mason slammed the door closed and locked it.

Hannibal will come for me once he learns what Mason’s done.

Chapter End Notes

See you guys next week!

Extermination

Chapter Summary

Hannibal is attacked and he must accelerate his plans for Will.

Chapter Notes

Hope you're ready for this chapter~

Hannibal was finishing up his sketch of Orion for the nest room when the door to his office opened and a strong-looking alpha stepped in.

“ *Buonasera, dottore.* ”

“ *Buonasera.* ”

“ *Signore* Verger sends his regards.”

Hannibal discretely moved the scalpel he used to sharpen his pencils into the sleeve of his shirt. “Has something happened?”

“He knows what you were planning with his omega.”

Hannibal’s eyes flashed. *Will.*

“So he sent me to teach you a lesson about touching what doesn’t belong to you.”

Hannibal slowly rose from his chair. “An alpha sends another alpha to defend his omega. What does that say about Mason?”

The intruding alpha didn’t reply.

“Was that a Sardinian accent I heard?”

The Sardinian answered in the affirmative.

“Best to be kidnapped by a Sardinian,” Hannibal mused, slowly walking around the edge of his desk.

The Sardinian watched Hannibal’s movements carefully.

“Are you going to hurt me here? Or were you ordered to take me to Mason?” Hannibal pressed. “If you are taking me to him, I will cooperate.”

“You’re no longer welcome at Muskrat Farm.”

Hannibal nodded. “I thought not.”

The Sardinian rapidly approached Hannibal, fist ready to land a punch. Hannibal spun to avoid the initial attack and drove the scalpel into the Sardinian’s eye before lunging at him.

The Sardinian roared in pain as Hannibal tackled him to the ground, his strong hands wrapped around the Sardinian’s throat.

The Sardinian kicked and bucked his hips, trying to dislodge Hannibal from where he sat on his chest. The doctor increased the pressure on the Sardinian’s throat and bared his teeth.

“What is Mason planning to do with Will?”

The Sardinian gave him a wicked smile in reply as Hannibal’s office phone began to ring.

Both alphas were momentarily distracted but the Sardinian recovered sooner. He shoved Hannibal off his chest and pinned the doctor down. The Sardinian grunted and pulled the scalpel from his eye. He tossed it aside and punched Hannibal in the face.

“I may have to kill you on accident!”

Another hit made contact with Hannibal’s face and his head jerked to the side. He could see the scalpel, but it was too far away for him to grab. No matter, Hannibal had other weapons to buy him the seconds he needed.

“Wha...What does Mason want with Will?” Hannibal rasped.

“Not sure, but I doubt it will be pleasant,” the Sardinian taunted. “Your little omega will scream.”

Hannibal’s eyes flashed and the Sardinian leaned in to continue to taunt. Hannibal surged forward and clamped his teeth around the Sardinian’s nose. A scream of pain bubbled up from the depths of the Sardinian’s throat as Hannibal tore at the sensitive flesh. Blood poured into Hannibal’s mouth and the Sardinian’s nose pulled loose.

The injured alpha scrambled back and Hannibal sat up, chewing on the warm flesh in his mouth. The Sardinian’s eyes widened in horror and he pushed himself further away from the doctor.

Hannibal calmly retrieved the scalpel and got to his feet. Blood covered his face and his eyes shone with the deadly color. He held his body like a predator on the prowl as he closed the distance between him and the Sardinian.

The bloodied scalpel was driven into the wounded alpha’s throat before he could raise his hands to defend himself and pulled out just as quickly. The scalpel was discarded again in

favor of Hannibal's strong hands. They wrapped around the Sardinian's head and snapped the Sardininan's neck.

Hannibal took a step back as the fallen alpha slumped to the floor. He took a few steadying breaths before realizing that his phone was still ringing. Hannibal pulled out a pocket square and used it to pick up the receiver. "Dr. Lecter's office?"

There was silence on the other end for a moment. "Doctor Lecter," Mason said.

"Were you expecting your Sardinian friend?"

"I was, in fact. Seems he didn't do his job well enough."

Hannibal looked over at the body on his floor. "So hard to find good help these days."

"Yes, indeed."

Hannibal waited.

"You really did some good work on Will, doctor. He got a real bloom about his cheeks in the past few weeks. Should have known it wasn't just because of your therapy, no. I should have realized what you are."

"And what am I?"

"An alpha."

Hannibal softly growled at the recognition of his power.

"You turned Will against me."

"Will was never yours," Hannibal returned.

"Perhaps I could have been a more attentive alpha to him," Mason mused, "but I can rectify that. I'll just need to reteach Will his manners."

"Manners?"

"Yes, you've made him savage, doctor. He attacked me."

Hannibal smiled proudly.

"If you set foot on Verger property again, I won't hesitate to defend what's mine."

Hannibal chuckled. "I think you had better worry more about what's inside your walls than without."

Mason hung up and Hannibal returned his attention to the Sardinian on the floor.

"Shame to let the meat go to waste."

It took more effort than Hannibal would have liked, but the Sardinian was loaded into the trunk of the Bentley and transported to Hannibal's home. Hannibal stored him in the basement fridge before packing a bag of items he deemed necessary and driving out to Muskrat Farm. This wasn't how he'd planned to make Will his, but it would be more satisfying.

Hannibal took the service road around the back of the estate and parked out of range of the security cameras. He grabbed the bag and continued on foot.

Avoiding the security cameras was difficult and Hannibal guessed that Mason had other security measures in place, but he found his route up to the main house unhindered. He paused at a side door for a moment to focus his mind before entering the house.

The halls were too quiet; Mason knew Hannibal was there. The intruder slipped from shadow to shadow and made his way to Mason's bedroom.

Lights flicked on, temporarily blinding Hannibal from seeing where Mason and Cordell stood. A bandage covered Mason's left cheek and Hannibal assumed Will was the cause.

"I would have thought you'd go for Will first," Mason tutted.

"It isn't wise to leave a dragon unslain," Hannibal replied.

Mason frowned and nodded.

"I have plans for you, Doctor Lecter," Cordell smiled.

Hannibal studied Cordell's husky build. "Mason, I do believe you have a type. Have you ever considered that omegas may not be for you?"

"I wasn't planning to have you killed tonight," Mason returned. "But you've forced my hand."

Cordell approached Hannibal, who slipped a kitchen knife from his sleeve and drew it across the approaching alpha's throat. Crimson stained Cordell's throat and shirt while his hands tried to stem the flow.

Mason's eyes widened and he took a step back from Hannibal.

"This could have been easy, Mason," Hannibal said.

"You wanted to steal my omega," Mason accused.

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "Can one call it 'stealing' when the person in question comes willingly?"

"He's mine!" Mason snapped. His tone reminded Hannibal of a petulant child.

"He would beg to differ," Hannibal replied, opening the bag he was carrying.

Mason scoffed. “He’s an *omega* ; a docile, needy, babymaker.”

“Then what happened to your face?”

Mason sneered at him.

Hannibal pulled something from his bag and slowly stood up. “What did Will do to you?”

“Little bitch bit me,” Mason admitted.

“Bit?”

Mason nodded. “He’ll regret that.”

“Perhaps,” Hannibal conceded. “Or perhaps not.”

“He will; omegas aren’t fighters.”

Hannibal swiftly closed the distance between them and pressed a respirator to Mason’s mouth and nose. The push of a button sent a series of hallucinogenic drugs into Mason’s orafices and Hannibal stepped back.

Mason’s pupils grew large and he began to laugh uncontrollably. “Whoa…what…what have you given me?”

“A cocktail of drugs of my own creation,” Hannibal replied.

Mason laughed and cocked his head at the boar wearing Hannibal’s clothes. Or did the doctor have a boar’s head? Mason couldn’t tell.

“Sit, Mason.”

Mason looked around for a chair and found himself surrounded by piglets. “Here piggy, piggy, piggy!”

“Mason,” a stern commanding voice said. “Sit.”

Mason found himself seated on the floor, surrounded by piglets.

“It’s fascinating how powerful an alpha’s Voice is on other alphas. Especially when they’re drugged,” Hannibal mused.

“These piggies are making me hungry!” Mason commented, not hearing the doctor’s musings.

Hannibal glanced down at him. “Eat your face then.”

“Eat my…? Eat…my…face?”

“Eat your face,” Hannibal repeated, leaning into his alpha Voice.

Mason took out a knife from his pocket. Hannibal recognized it from a story Mason had once told him about his sire.

"Papa would use this knife to test the depth of fat on a pig's back. And now, I carry it with me."

Mason held the knife in one hand while the other felt his face for a place to start. "Eat my…."

His fingers found the bandage on his cheek and removed it. Hannibal leaned in and smiled when he saw what Will had done.

Mason's knife sliced through the broken skin and carved out a slice. The bloody flesh was transported into Mason's mouth and he ate enthusiastically before going back for more.

Hannibal sat and watched this for a few bites to make sure Mason would continue to do as he'd been told. When it became clear that Mason would, Hannibal walked through Mason's room to the doors to the nest room. The doors were locked when he tried them.

"Will?" Hannibal called. There was no point in getting in if the omega had been moved.

"H-Hannibal?" Will's voice was laced with anxiety but sprinkled with hope.

"I'm here," Hannibal soothed. "Did Mason lock you in?"

"He keeps the key in his pocket," Will replied before adding. "He knows you're an alpha. He wants to hurt you!"

Hannibal rested his forehead against the door. "It's okay, Will. Mason isn't going to hurt you again. Now, pack whatever you want to take with you while I go find the key. You're coming home with me tonight."

He didn't wait for Will to reply and marched back into Mason's room.

Mason was still sitting on the floor, carving up his face and happily eating it. "I taste like chicken," he informed Hannibal.

"I need the key, Mason."

"Key?"

"The one in your pocket," Hannibal pressed. "The one you use to lock Will up."

"Oh! That key!" Mason retrieved it with fumbling fingers. "He's a naughty omega. Took a bite out of my face!"

"Yes," Hannibal fondly mused, "very naughty."

He took the key from Mason and suggested that the drugged alpha eat his own nose before returning to the nest room doors.

“Will?”

“I’m here,” Will’s voice replied from the other side. “It’s very warm in here.”

Hannibal unlocked the door and beheld Will on the other side. The omega’s skin was pale and clammy, making the pink mark on his cheek stand out more. His curls were plastered to his forehead and his t-shirt was soaked with sweat. A warm aroma flooded Hannibal’s senses and he realized what was happening.

“Your heat is starting.”

“So…warm…” Will whined.

Hannibal took a steadying breath. “We need to get you home.”

“Alpha…” Will shuffled towards him and nuzzled at Hannibal’s throat. “Need you.”

“Soon, dear boy,” Hannibal promised before scooping Will up in his arms in a bridal carry.

Will held Bit to his chest and rested his head against Hannibal’s shoulder.

Hannibal carried Will through the house, across the lawn, and to his car. He removed his jacket and wrapped it around will before buckling him in. Hannibal cupped the omega’s face and Will melted into the touch with a whine.

“Stay with me, Will.”

“I...I’m trying, alpha.”

Hannibal closed the door and climbed into the driver’s seat. In the enclosed space, the scent of Will’s heat was almost overwhelming. Hannibal sped all the way back to Baltimore, white-knuckling the steering wheel as he fought his instincts.

“H-Hannibal,” Will moaned. Slick was seeping through his underwear onto the leather seat.

The alpha almost rear-ended the car ahead of him. “Almost there.”

“I...I’m so….”

Hannibal thickly swallowed. “I know.”

“I need…”

Hannibal took his right hand off the steering wheel and caressed Will’s cheek. “You’re doing so well, Will. I deeply apologize for making you wait.”

“I know...it’s just….”

Hannibal gave him an understanding look. “You feel as if your body is betraying you. You wanted to be more in control when this moment came.”

Will nodded.

“I think this is good timing.”

“How?”

“You will no longer be Mason’s; you’ll be mine.”

Will gave Hannibal a soft look.

The traffic finally moved and Hannibal pulled up to his house. The car was barely put in park before the engine was killed and Hannibal was opening Will’s door. His warm hands helped Will to his feet before scooping him up in a bridal carry.

Hannibal held his head high as he carried Will across the threshold and into his home. At last, Will was there. Will was safe. Will would be his.

Hannibal carried Will into the nest room and into the nest box. Will nuzzled happily at the pillows and blankets as Hannibal stripped.

“Smells so good,” Will sighed. “Like you.”

Hannibal looked down at Will and they took in each other’s naked bodies. Will; flushed, slim, and needful, Hannibal; warm, broad, and ready. Will licked his lips in approval.

“Alpha,” he praised.

Hannibal climbed into the nest and parted Will’s legs. “Omega.”

Will’s eyelids fluttered and a river of slick spilled out of his hole. Hannibal gripped the omega’s hips and pulled him flush, his aching cock easily sliding into Will. Both gasped at the sensation and had to pause before continuing.

“Have you ever…?” Will inquired.

“Not since I was a young man,” Hannibal admitted. “But that was curiosity. This,” he touched Will’s cheek, “is purposeful.”

Will wrapped his legs around Hannibal’s waist and Hannibal rolled his hips experimentally. Will gasped in arousal and Hannibal picked up the pace; building a steady rhythm.

Will fisted the sheets as a wanton moan fell from his plush lips. Hannibal leaned over and began to kiss Will’s throat. The omega groaned and his hands left the sheets to touch Hannibal; his hair, his shoulders, his back - anywhere he could.

Time lost all meaning for Will in a haze of his heat. All he knew was the weight of Hannibal’s body above him and the stretch of Hannibal inside him. It was too much and not enough all at once, leaving him breathless.

“Will.” Hannibal’s husky voice seemed so far away, despite being right in his ear.

“Yes?”

“I want to claim you.”

Will offered himself. “Do it.”

Hannibal’s warm lips kissed then parted over Will’s shoulder. Will felt the scrape of Hannibal’s teeth against this skin before Hannibal bit down. Will moaned deep in his throat and he felt Hannibal’s knot expand within him. Hannibal rutted as he filled Will’s hole and moaned as Will’s flesh and blood filled his mouth.

Mine. You’re mine, dear boy. I’ve marked you. Claimed you. Filled you. Anyone who tries to take you from me will be eaten.

Heat

Chapter Summary

Will spends his first heat with Hannibal.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Time meant nothing. All Will knew was the warm nest and the heat of Hannibal's body. He'd never imagined that an alpha could be so attentive, so giving, or have *that* much stamina. Or that a knot could be so filling.

Hannibal had thought ahead and stocked the interior of the nestbox with water and shelf-stable snacks full of protein. He insisted on feeding Will by hand and made sure he drank enough water to replace what he was losing in his heat. Whenever they had to wait for Hannibal's knot to deflate, Hannibal would hold Will to his chest, encouraging Will to listen to his heartbeat and breathing; to find comfort and security in them.

"I feel like a pup," Will commented at one point. "Placed on the chest of their sire or mare to encourage a bond."

Hannibal chuckled.

Will began to slide his fingers through the alpha's chest hair. "You thought of everything. You were ready for me to come here."

"Mmm, I was prepared, but not ready," Hannibal replied, glancing up at the dome, which he had only had time to sketch Orion and the surrounding stars on.

Will glanced up too. "You can still paint it."

"I plan to," Hannibal mused. "I want this to be a home for you as much as it is for me."

Will met his eyes. "In what way?"

"In every way that you want," Hannibal replied. "You are welcome to go anywhere in the house or outside of it. I will not control your movements, but I ask that you return to me by the end of the day."

"You don't want to keep me here?"

Hannibal frowned. "Do not misunderstand me, Will. I am your alpha. I will protect and guard you, but that should not prevent you from living a full life. I want a mate who shares my love

of food, language, and the arts. You cannot experience that from this room alone."

Will's lips parted in surprise. *He wants an equal.*

Hannibal readjusted his position in the nest, causing Will to whine as Hannibal's cock brushed his over-sensitive nerves.

"You've been taking me so well, Will."

The omega's face pinked and Hannibal softly touched Will's stomach, covering the scar Mason had left him with.

"Alpha?"

"Yes?"

"...Are you thinking about how I will look carrying your pup?"

"Do you want a pup, Will?"

"Yes, but...not now." He nervously studied Hannibal's face.

"Did you think that would anger me?"

"The thought had crossed my mind," Will admitted.

Hannibal frowned.

"You've been good to me," Will soothed, "but every alpha I've known has their limits."

Hannibal caressed Will's cheek. "You have known loss, Will. It would be cruel of me to ignore that."

Will nodded.

"I intend to give you a pup, Will," Hannibal added, "but only when you ask me to."

"And if I never ask you to?"

"Then 'never' is when I will give you a pup."

Will studied Hannibal's face. He found no trace of a lie in the alpha's face and that unsettled him more than detecting a lie would have. Will was used to being lied to; to being tricked and to having promises broken. But honesty, open and freely given? Will wasn't sure if he'd ever known that, even before Mason.

"Will?"

"Hmm?"

Hannibal petted the omega's curls and rolled his hips. "I'm ready for you, dear boy."

A whine escaped Will's lips as he felt how loose Hannibal's cock was inside him.

"Ask for what you want, Will."

"You," Will breathed. "You, alpha."

"Be specific, omega."

Will tried to roll his hips, but Hannibal's large hands held him in place. "Alpha…"

"Go on, tell me what you want."

"I need your knot, alpha."

Hannibal gave him a wolfish smile then flipped them so he could bury himself deep.

Will woke up. He wasn't sure when he'd fallen asleep, but he wasn't anymore. The nest was cool and he let out a whine. When warm hands didn't pull him close, Will sat up and looked around.

"Alpha?"

Silence answered him.

Panic rose in Will's chest and he wrapped a blanket around himself. He crawled to the lip of the nestbox and peered into the storage area underneath. Shelves of preserves and blankets greeted him, but no Hannibal.

Will grabbed at the edge of the nestbox and pulled himself out. His body protested, but his anxiety was too high for him to listen.

On shaky legs, Will began his search for Hannibal. The alpha's house was smaller than Muskrat Farm, but Will didn't know his way around. He wandered from room to room, only to find them empty. Will let out a whine. "Alpha?"

Silence answered him again.

Will kept looking and found himself in the kitchen. He'd never seen one so extravagant, yet so cold. One one of the counters was a plate of finger food. Will took one and slowly ate it. His eyes wandered as he ate and he noticed an open door leading to the basement. He padded towards it and opened the door wider. The smell of blood, mixed with Hannibal's musk overwhelmed Will's sensitive senses.

"A-Alpha?"

Will heard footsteps and Hannibal appeared at the foot of the stairs. "Will?"

The omega took a step back as the aroma of the basement overwhelmed him. He sat down and Hannibal's footfalls on the steps pounded in his head.

"Will, why are you out of the nest?"

"You were gone," Will accused.

Hannibal bowed his head. "I hadn't planned to be gone so long, dear boy."

"What were you doing?"

"I wanted to cook for you," Hannibal replied calmly. "I also had some fresh meat to take care of. I thought I would have been back before you awoke."

Will nodded and pulled the blanket closer around his body.

"I made you worry," Hannibal continued, "I should not have left you for so long during your heat."

"Take me back to the nest?"

Hannibal scooped Will up in his arms and carried him back to the nestbox. "Are you mad at me, Will?"

"...No."

"Will."

Will sighed. "A bit."

Hannibal waited.

"I thought you'd left me."

"A reasonable fear, after everything you've been through," Hannibal soothed. "Allow me to make it up to you."

Will adjusted his position on the pillows and spread his legs. "Go on. Show me how good of an alpha you are."

Chapter End Notes

Ah, asexuality, making it hard for me to write smut. Hopefully this was enjoyable without it.

Passageways

Chapter Summary

Will explores Hannibal's house, wonders what secrets his alpha is hiding, and thinks of a name for his plush stag.

Chapter Notes

Who ordered fluff because I've got a delivery - XD

Will stirred in the nest. It had been a week since his rescue from Muskrat Farm and his heat had subsided enough that Will only needed to be knotted once or twice a day. Hannibal had gone back to work three days ago, leaving Will to adjust to his new life.

“You can go anywhere you wish, Will,” Hannibal had reminded him. “All I ask is that you be back in time for dinner at six o’clock sharp.”

The first day had been a disaster. Will had been too anxious to leave the nest; his mind scaring him with visions of Mason finding him or Hannibal punishing him for doing something wrong.

“Have I done anything to make you believe that I would hurt you?” Hannibal had whispered that evening as he calmed his omega.

“N-No.”

Hannibal had petted his hair. “It’s easier for your mind to believe that I would harm you than to believe you’re safe.”

Will had held Bit more closely to his chest.

The next day was better. Will had left the nest with Bit under one arm and the stag Hannibal had given him under the other.

“You need a name,” Will had mused aloud as he wandered his alpha’s home.

There was a sophistication and grandeur to Hannibal’s house which felt far older than anything at Muskrat Farm. Will felt like a Gothic heroine as he crept along the hallways and snooped in the upstairs bedrooms.

When he came downstairs, Will was reminded of the coppery scent of fresh blood he'd caught a whiff of in the basement. He cautiously approached the door then hesitated.

"He's been so attentive and caring. Why am I looking for flaws, lies or deceit? Everyone keeps secrets. Everyone has things they don't want others to know. So why am I looking for Hannibal's? It will ruin everything if I find something I don't like, but...what if he's like Mason, just better at hiding it?"

Will shook his head and held the stag close to his face. He closed his eyes and inhaled Hannibal's musk. Will's entire body relaxed and his anxiety was dulled.

"I'll ask him when he gets home."

Satisfied with that decision, Will left the kitchen and wandered into the library.

Hannibal didn't own a single novel. What he did own were academic tomes covering art, history, language, music, and architecture. Will carefully selected a history tome and curled up to read. He wanted to enrich himself for his alpha, but he soon found himself nodding off. He was roused hours later by Hannibal returning home.

"There you are, Will," Hannibal mused.

"Fell asleep," Will yawned.

Hannibal carefully picked up the book laying across Will's chest. "Curious about Italy, Will?"

"I want to know you," Will replied. "You said you became a man there; I wanted to see the place that helped shape you."

"Let me help you." Hannibal sat down on the ottoman beside Will's chair and began to describe the streets, the people, and the art of his youth.

"I learn better when you teach me," Will hummed.

"I will remember that," Hannibal nodded. "What did you do with yourself today?"

"Explored the house."

Hannibal nodded. "Will it do?"

"Yes."

"Good. This is your home too, Will," Hannibal reminded him.

"I'm getting used to that."

They talked for a little longer before moving to the kitchen so Hannibal could cook dinner.

"Alpha?"

Hannibal paused and looked at Will. "Yes?"

Will kept his eyes low. “Do you think Mason is looking for me?”

“What brought this into your mind, Will?” Hannibal pressed. “Has something happened?”

“No, nothing,” Will assured him.

Hannibal resumed getting the bowls, herbs and spices set out to prepare dinner. “If Mason does come after you,” he commented, “it won’t be for many weeks, if not months.”

“How do you know?”

Hannibal focused on the recipe card in his hand.

“What did you do to him?”

Hannibal looked up. “There are things I will reveal to you in time, Will. This is one of those things. I want you to feel safe here first.”

Will’s anxieties flared up inside him. “Am I not your mate?”

Hannibal set down the recipe card to give Will his full attention. “You are mine, Will.”

“Then why can’t you tell me what you did?” Will pressed

“There are things about me which can be hard to understand,” Hannibal admitted. “I want you to be in a good place to listen to what I have to say when I finally tell you.”

Will bowed his head. “I’m sure you have your reasons.”

“Do you not believe me, Will?”

“I’ve been around too many secrets.”

Hannibal walked around the counter and took the omega’s hands in his. “My secrets will be yours, Will. Nothing will be kept from you. I’m only keeping them now so that you can focus on yourself and on making this place your home.”

“...I want to believe you,” Will admitted. “You’ve kept your word so far, so I will trust you.”

Hannibal respectfully bowed his head, accepting his omega's decision.

“What’s for dinner?” Will inquired.

Hannibal lifted his head. “Liver and kidney pie.”

“Sounds delicious,” Will smiled.

Hannibal gave him a small smile and began his preparations. As he worked, he gave Will a few odd jobs so they were working side by side. Their hands touched and shoulders brushed as they went about their tasks, creating an air of intimacy and familiarity between them.

When they sat down to eat, Will felt Hannibal's eyes on him. His cheeks warmed and he sipped his wine.

"Where would you like to sleep tonight, Will?"

Will's eyebrows pulled together.

"Your nest is very comfortable, but there is also my bed," Hannibal clarified.

Will's eyebrows raised. "You'd let me sleep in your bed?"

"Of course. I want you by my side, Will."

"I thought you followed the traditions of old?"

"Which one are you referring to?"

"The one where alphas and omegas don't share a bed unless the omega is in heat."

Hannibal frowned. "There are many ancient traditions concerning where mated omegas should sleep. I prefer the ones which would allow me to keep you close."

Will nodded.

"Is that something you would like, Will?"

"Yes, alpha."

"Good."

They finished dinner and Will helped with the dishes before they returned to the library. Hannibal selected a book and sat down to read, expecting Will to do the same. Instead, Will grabbed the plush stag and came over to Hannibal's chair. The alpha let out a surprised sound as Will climbed onto his lap and rested his head against Hannibal's shoulder.

"Read to me?" Will whispered.

Hannibal wrapped an arm around Will's waist and began to read. His eyes often wandered from the page to look at his omega. Will's soft curls dominated his vision, but he could also see the omega's long lashes and soft lips. Hannibal closed his eyes and softly inhaled the scent of a content omega.

"I think I'll call him Blue," Will mumbled sleepily.

"Hmm?"

Will held up the stag. "Blue."

Hannibal smirked. "Then 'Blue' he shall be."

Inspection

Chapter Summary

Will settles into his new life and pushes Hannibal to tell him the truth about himself.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will awoke the next morning surrounded by his alpha's musk. He opened his eyes and found himself in Hannibal's bed. The mattress looked king-sized and was a pleasing combination of support and softness. Instinctually, Will began to knead the mattress, his nesting desire telling him that this would make a good liner.

"Do you like it?"

Will looked up.

Hannibal was standing in the doorway to the bathroom wearing his suit pants and button-up; the collar upturned and his selected tie waiting to be knotted. There was a casual intimacy to this which mesmerized Will for several seconds.

"Will?"

"Hmm? Yes, I do like it."

"Shall I order you a nest mattress from that company?"

Will nodded and Hannibal turned his attention to his tie.

"May I?"

Hannibal looked up at Will then came closer.

Will sat up on his knees and got to work. Hannibal's suppressant filled Will's senses as he worked and he frowned.

"Is something wrong Will?"

"You don't smell like yourself."

"I've presented myself to the world as a beta for many years," Hannibal reminded him. "It would be detrimental to a few of my patients if they learned the truth."

Will huffed and finished the half-Windsor knot he'd been tying. Hannibal's hand cupped Will's jaw before he could pull away.

"Speak your mind, dear boy."

Will's lips parted.

"Why do my suppressants displease you?"

"You're hiding that you're mine," Will returned.

Hannibal's eyes flickered with hungry delight at his omega's possessiveness.

"Everyone can smell that I am a mated omega," Will continued, "but not who my alpha is."

Hannibal cupped Will's face. "And you want them to know how good your alpha is to you."

"Yes," Will breathed.

"I cannot reveal myself all at once, Will," Hannibal cautioned.

"Slowly, then?"

"Some of my patients would request a referral," Hannibal warned. "They don't trust alphas."

Will frowned. "...I don't want you to lose patients."

Hannibal lifted Will's chin with a finger. "When I come home, you can remove this false scent from me."

Will's eyes shone.

"Does that please you?"

"Yes, alpha."

Hannibal kissed Will's forehead in approval.

"May I cook tonight?"

Hannibal blinked in surprise. "Do you have a dish in mind, Will?"

"I'd like to make some *gombo* for you," Will replied, his Louisiana accent poking out.

"I should have most of what you need."

"Could you pick up some shellfish after work?"

Hannibal nodded. "We'll need to get you a car so you can run errands yourself."

"That would be nice."

Hannibal nodded and finished dressing in his three-piece suit. He gave Will a warm kiss before leaving for work.

After the door closed, Will laid back and pulled the blankets over his head so he could enjoy his alpha's musk a little longer. An hour later, he slid out of bed and padded into the kitchen to find some breakfast. As he searched the fridge, his eyes were repeatedly drawn to the basement door.

"He promised to tell me everything."

Will made something simple and ate it while sitting on the counter. His eyes kept wandering back to the basement door and he huffed in frustration.

"It's nothing!"

Will marched into the library and scanned the shelves. "I need to ask for some books on fly fishing. Or some supplies to make lures."

The day passed slowly but Will grew more excited as dinner time approached. It had been years since he'd made gumbo, but he still remembered his mom's recipe.

Hannibal was able to come home early with the shellfish and Will got to work.

"Can I help?" Hannibal inquired.

"Why don't you whip up something to go with it?"

Hannibal nodded and got to work.

"Have you ever had *gombo* ?" Will asked as he filled a bowl for Hannibal.

"I have not," Hannibal admitted.

They sat down and Will waited for Hannibal to take a bite.

"...An excellent blend of spices and flavors," Hannibal nodded.

"Is that a good thing?"

"Of course, Will. You will need to make this again for me."

Will smiled then leaned forward. "I had another motive for cooking tonight."

"I thought you might. After dinner, go down into the basement. There's enough down there to help you understand, my clever boy."

"Why won't you just tell me?"

"I could," Hannibal mused, sipping his wine, "but it's better if you gain the knowledge yourself."

Will frowned but after dinner, he did as Hannibal had told him to.

The basement was chilly and lit by cool light which gave everything a sterile look. Will's eyes slowly took in what he at first thought was a butchery and then widened when he realized what kind of meat was prepared there.

"People...he eats...people. I've eaten *people!"*

Will sat on the floor as he tried to process Hannibal's secret. Eventually, he got up and went back upstairs.

Hannibal was standing in the kitchen, finishing the dishes. "Hello, Will."

"Hello, Dr. Lecter."

Hannibal waited for a moment. "Do you still want me to be your alpha?"

"Is that what you're worried about?"

Hannibal nodded. "No one has understood me as well as you, Will."

"Who do you...eat?"

"Pigs. Cows. The rude."

"You choose them purposefully?"

Hannibal nodded.

Will considered that for several moments. "Am I safe? If we have pups...will they be safe?"

"You are my family, Will and I will always protect my family from harm," Hannibal vows.

"Family means that much to you?"

"Yes."

"...May I have some time to think about this?"

"Of course, Will."

"Thank you."

Will quietly went to bathe and then curled up in his nest to sleep. Bit and Blue were waiting there for him and he paused when picking one.

Part of Will wanted to throw Blue and all the bedding out of the nest because it smelled of Hannibal. His alpha. His cannibalistic alpha. His alpha who had taken such good care of him and tried not to scare him with the truth.

The other part of Will wanted to hug Blue close to his chest and cry because he feared that no one would ever look after him or care about him as much as Hannibal had over the past several days.

In the end, Blue was pulled close to Will's chest and the omega sobbed until he was hiccuping.

On the other side of the house, Hannibal was getting into bed. He knew he wouldn't sleep well that night, so he picked up a book.

"There was always a chance he would reject me, but I didn't think his reaction would be so subdued. If Will was ever going to yell at me, this would have been it."

Hannibal forced himself to focus on the book and lost himself in it so much that he didn't hear the door open.

"Alpha?"

Hannibal looked up.

Will was standing at the foot of the bed, Blue in his arms, his eyes red.

"Will?" There was a note of concern in Hannibal's voice.

"...It's going to take me some time to fully accept all of you," Will mumbled.

"I didn't expect you to accept me tonight, Will."

Will nodded.

"Can I do anything for you?"

Will huffed and approached the bed. He climbed under the sheets and curled up in a ball. "I'm still mad at you."

Hannibal softly smirked and set his book aside before wrapping his arms around Will. The omega nuzzled him and inhaled his musk.

"You want comfort," Hannibal softly validated.

"I want my alpha," Will agreed.

Hannibal rumbled in his chest to soothe him. "I'm here."

Will slowly fell asleep in Hannibal's arms. He didn't like how he'd crawled back into Hannibal's bed so soon, but he wanted comfort and Hannibal was the only one who could give it to him. It was too complex for Will to unpack then and there, so he went to sleep instead.

Chapter End Notes

I struggled with where to end this chapter. I didn't want to leave Will crying, but at the same time, I'm worried it came off as Will forgiving Hannibal too quickly.

A Break in Construction

Chapter Summary

> Hannibal does all he can to give Will the space he needs to process Hannibal's cannibalism.

Chapter Notes

> Hello! Sorry for not posting yesterday. I had a stomach bug and wasn't feeling up to writing.
>
> Worldbuilding Note: While it is mostly considered outdated, alphas are encouraged to set up a mate account with their bank. This account is for the personal use of their mate, but limitations can be placed on it by the alpha.
> Mate accounts became popular in the 1960s when omegas began to enter the workforce, but they were still required to take time off for their heat (Heat Leave). This began to change in the early 1970s, due to the growing access to suppressants, which, at the time, only enabled omegas to skip heat cycles. Modern versions of suppressants can stop heat cycles completely, but employers are still required to offer Heat Leave to all omega employees.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hannibal woke up to find Will curled up with Hannibal relaxed a bit. Part of him had wondered if Will would slip away in the night; the omega had proven himself strangely unpredictable to Hannibal. He'd long considered himself a predator. Something like a panther or a tiger, but Will was something else. He was a wolf; beautiful and dangerous with a dark gleam in his eyes. As Hannibal studied Will, he wondered what the gleam would look like if stoked into a fire. He closed his eyes and imagined how glorious Will had looked when he attacked Mason. Yes, that was the Will he wanted; an equal in all things.

A shiver ran up Hannibal's spine and he felt his length grow heavy at the mere idea of Will covered in blood. He glanced over at the still sleeping omega. Hannibal longed to pull Will to him and kiss him awake before pressing inside him to their mutual pleasure. It was tempting, but Hannibal resisted; he needed to respect Will so they could get back to how they were.

Hannibal kissed Will's curls and slowly got out of bed to start his day. He moved as silently as possible to allow Will to sleep. After washing his face and slipping into his house coat,

Hannibal went into the kitchen to make coffee.

The first cup had just brewed when Hannibal heard the sound of bare feet on the floor. Will was standing in the doorway, Blue under his arm.

“Good morning, Will,” Hannibal warmly welcomed.

“Morning,” Will sleepily replied. “Coffee?”

Hannibal poured him a cup and Will drank it gratefully.

“How did you sleep?”

“Fine,” Will nodded.

“Breakfast?”

“Toast.”

Hannibal began to make Will’s toast and felt the omega’s eyes on him. “Lost in thought, Will?”

“No, I’m beginning to see you clearly.”

“See me?”

Will nodded. “See you as I’ve never seen anyone else before.”

Hannibal straightened in surprise.

“You’re my mate,” Will affirmed, “but after last night, I need to deal with my feelings about you. And I can’t do that here.”

Hannibal’s heartbeat quickened. Fear prickled at the back of his mind as the possibility of Will leaving him or breaking their bond became a possibility. If Will asked for that, Hannibal decided he would need to kill him.

“Is there somewhere I can go?” Will continued.

Hannibal took a moment. “I have two other properties. You could stay at one of them.”

“Where?”

“One is a cliff-side house on the coast, the other is a cabin in Wolf Trap, Virginia.”

Will considered his options. “The cabin.”

Hannibal nodded and began to clean up the dishes.

“Hannibal?”

“Yes, Will?”

The omega slowly approached. “Do you think I’m rejecting you?”

“You need space, Will,” Hannibal mumbled.

“That didn’t answer my question.”

Hannibal met Will’s eyes. “Your need for space is a valid concern after everything you’ve been through, but it is hard not to feel the sting of rejection when you want that space to be away from your mate.”

“A sting, not a stab,” Will said. “I became your mate without fully knowing you and now I’m asking for time to think about that choice. I don’t think that’s unreasonable.”

“No, it’s not,” Hannibal agreed.

Will came closer. “In order to do this, I’m going to need your help, *alpha* .”

“I have a mate account, into which I’ve been setting aside a portion of my income,” Hannibal replied. “It’s yours, Will. If you like, we can register you as my mate and then put that account in your name.”

“You’d let me have access to it?”

“I did not choose you idly, Will,” Hannibal reminded. “The money was set aside for my mate to do with as they please.”

“...How much?”

“A little over a million by now.”

Will’s eyes widened and he had to sit down.

“I didn’t think I would find a mate,” Hannibal explained, “but I did not want to be ill-prepared if I should find one.”

Will softly shook his head at Hannibal. He was still processing how much money he was about to have at his disposal.

They finished their breakfast and dressed in separate rooms before getting into the car and driving to the Baltimore Office of Omega Registration. The wait was long and there were too many alphas for Will’s comfort after his captivity. He sat close to Hannibal, who wrapped a protective arm around him.

When they were finally called in, a cheery male beta led them to an examination room. He chatted with them a bit to calm Will’s nerves before asking to photograph Will’s claim mark. He then took photographs and dental casts of Hannibal’s teeth for the record.

“Would you like to change your name, Mr. Graham?” the beta asked as he prepared the paperwork.

“Could we hyphenate our names?” Will asked.

“Graham-Lecter,” Hannibal mused in approval.

The beta handed them the paperwork to co-sign. “Congratulations, Dr. and Mr. Graham-Lecter, you are now officially recognized as a mated pair by the State of Maryland.”

Their next stop was the bank where a female beta consultant met with them.

“Now, Dr. Graham-Lecter - I’ll need to update your name for our system - as the alpha, you can set a limit on the account for how much can be withdrawn at time.”

“My mate is to have full access to the account,” Hannibal insisted. “No limit.”

The beta’s mouth fell open but she did as Hannibal had asked.

“You’ll need a car,” Hannibal said as they returned to the Bentley. “I’ve been thinking about that for a few days.”

Will stopped. “You’d give me that much freedom? A car, full bank account, a house.”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

Hannibal’s eyebrows contracted. “You asked for space, Will. I can’t have you living in that cabin without resources.”

Will nodded and Hannibal approached him.

“Is this about Mason?”

Will nodded again. “He enjoyed giving me things and then taking them away. Or attaching a price to what I wanted. He never... *gave* me things. He’d dangle them over my head and I had to jump for them.”

Hannibal listened respectfully.

“You’ve given me everything I’ve asked for,” Will continued, “but...it’s starting to feel too easy. Like I’m running out of chances before you start asking for something in return.”

“I understand your concerns, Will,” Hannibal validated. “Should I do something differently?”

Will considered this. “No, thank you.”

“Then I will continue to give things to you,” Hannibal nodded. “Do you want to pick out a car today, or do you want to wait?”

“We can do it today,” Will decided.

Hannibal nodded. “Do you know what you’d like?”

“...A truck? Nothing fancy. Just something that will get me where I want to go.”

Hannibal thought for a moment then motioned for Will to get into the car. He took Will to a vintage truck dealer and encouraged Will to wander.

Will looked for a bit and decided on a 1972 Ford F100. “Is this okay?”

“Yes, of course,” Hannibal nodded. “Would you like to buy it yourself?”

Will’s eyes shone.

Hannibal softly smiled as he watched Will eagerly buy his truck. *“A controlled release of power to make him feel more secure.”*

Will climbed into the cab and followed Hannibal home with a smile on his face. His life finally felt like it belonged to him. He had a bank account, a truck, and the promise of a house of his own; all things that a few months ago had felt out of reach. Will still didn’t know how to feel about Hannibal’s cannibalistic tendencies, but he liked how Hannibal had been treating him. Within a short time, Hannibal had made Will feel safer than he had in years. He’d given Will companionship and a freedom Will’d never imagined he could have.

The next day, Hannibal and Will loaded up Will’s truck then drove an hour to Wolf Trap, Virginia. They pulled up to a cabin in the middle of a field and Hannibal unlocked the front door then handed Will the key.

“I had it cleaned up a bit while we were out yesterday,” Hannibal said.

Will crossed the threshold into a large front room. There was a nice kitchen and a small back room. Stairs led to a second floor which was intended to be a bedroom.

“What do you think?” Hannibal asked when Will came back downstairs.

“I like it,” Will smiled.

Hannibal nodded and they began to bring in the supplies from Will’s truck. Groceries, blankets, clothes, and Bit and Blue. Hannibal let Will take the lead so he could feel comfortable in his new house.

“Would you like some lunch?” Hannibal asked.

“You brought lunch?”

Hannibal nodded and went to get the cooler out of his car.

Will shook his head. Of course Hannibal had brought a nice lunch.

“What will you do with yourself?” he asked as they ate.

“I haven’t fully decided,” Will admitted. “I might do some fishing or work on a boat motor.”

Hannibal nodded and a silence fell between them.

“You’ll only be without me for a few weeks,” Will reminded him. “I’ll have to come back during my heat.”

“I didn’t want to assume anything,” Hannibal replied.

Will met Hannibal’s eyes. “You’re still my alpha.”

Hannibal left shortly after lunch and Will began to settle in in earnest. The quiet of the countryside was deafening compared to the noise of Baltimore, and yet, more lively than the quiet of Muskrat Farm. That quiet had been eerie. Mason had once compared it to the quiet of the Sabbath. Will thought it was more like the quiet of a tomb.

Will decided to walk the property and went out. The open air was invigorating and he felt like he could run for miles. As he got near the tree line, something caught his eye. He couldn’t see it clearly, but Will knew it was an animal. His breathing slowed, as did his footsteps.

“Maybe it’s a coyote?”

The shape came a little closer and Will relaxed as he recognized the shape of a dog. It mostly looked like a Golden Retriever, but had been mixed with another breed in an unidentifiable way. Will knelt down and let the dog come to him. There was no collar or identification and the dog’s fur was caked in mud. If he belonged to someone, the dog had been away from home for a while.

“Want to come home with me?”

The dog cocked his head.

“Hmm?” Will mused, standing up.

The dog didn’t move to run, so Will began to walk back. As he did, he heard the dog following behind him.

Will washed and groomed the dog until his coat shone.

“...Winston,” he decided.

The dog looked at him.

“That’s your name; Winston.”

Winston licked Will’s nose in approval.

Chapter End Notes

Drama to resume in the next chapter or two.

Bodies in the Walls

Chapter Summary

Will's alone time gets disrupted when he goes into heat and another alpha turns up at his house.

Chapter Notes

PLEASE read this chapter at your discretion!!! This chapter contains elements of stalking and harassment, with it being strong implied that Randall would have sexually assaulted Will. I did my best to keep those elements tame (I have been stalked myself) but please, please, PLEASE be aware of your personal triggers.
Those elements don't appear until later in the chapter, so if you want to read around it, STOP after Will says "I'll come to you" and then pick up at "What felt like days later..." However, if you need to skip this chapter, I completely understand. Do what's best for you and your mental health!

Slowly, Will settled into his new life in Wolf Trap and began to shed the paranoia Mason had instilled in him over the past three years. Waking up in a quiet house no longer put Will on edge, but filled him with a contented peace. He'd get out of bed and take Winston out before coming back in and making breakfast. Will wasn't a chef like Hannibal, but the simple meals he did make brought a smile to his face. *He* had bought the ingredients and prepared it *himself* . How long had it been since he'd been able to say both of those things?

Midway through his second week of solitude, Will began to miss Hannibal. The feeling crept up on him like the setting of the sun. Will was working on a lure when his eyes fell on the untuned piano in the front room. Wil could hear it being played and saw Hannibal's nimble fingers moving across the keys in his mind. It was a warm idea, warm and soft as a spring afternoon, and Will lost himself in it.

"Do you play, Will?"

"No, I'm afraid I'm not very musically gifted."

Hannibal glanced at him and moved over on the bench in a clear invitation for Will to sit beside him. Will sat and Hannibal took his hands in his.

"If your fingers can tie lures and weave your own nets, they have the ability to play."

Will frowned at his own imagined conversation. How would Hannibal know that he did those things?

"I pay attention to you, Will." The response came in Hannibal's voice and Will wasn't entirely sure the thought had originated in his own head.

Will sighed and moved to the single armchair in the front room. *"Hannibal…I need to deal with my feelings about you."*

"Where would you like to begin?"

Will looked over and Hannibal was sitting at the piano bench.

"You might want to invest in more seating."

"I wasn't expecting to have company here."

"No, of course, you weren't. You came here to be away from humanity."

"Not humanity."

"Just me."

Will sighed. "You *eat* people."

Hannibal inclined his head. *"Does that unnerve you enough to cut me from you as if I were a tumor?"*

Will rubbed his face.

"Or are you afraid that you are already poisoned?"

Will was quiet.

"What I do is an act of dominance."

"...Makes you the apex predator. The ultimate alpha."

Hannibal smiled and Will noticed the sharpness of the alpha's teeth. "And protector," Hannibal added.

Will looked down and Hannibal stood up and they stepped into Will's memory palace. They found themselves in Hannibal's library late in the evening. A fire was burning in the fireplace and they sat in the two chairs near it.

"Did you know your sire, Will?"

"I've told you about him."

"The one who took you from boatyard to boatyard?"

Will nodded.

“Was he much of an alpha?”

Will looked up at Hannibal. “Excuse me?”

“Did he provide for you, Will? Or were you left to provide for yourself?”

Will pressed his lips together and a young version of himself ran into the library. He came up to Will and help up a lure he’d been working on. Hannibal surveyed the curly-haired boy with interest.

“It’s not done,” the child lamented in a thick Louisiana accent.

“No, it’s not,” Will agreed. “But you’re almost done.”

“We need to finish it so we can catch dinner.”

“Pa working late again?” Will sighed.

The boy nodded. The table in Will’s house where he was making his own lures appeared as his younger self went over to it to work. Hannibal got up and watched the young Will work.

“He’s quite good at this.”

“I learned young,” Will nodded.

“I wish pa was around more,” the boy admitted to Hannibal.

“You would be better to your pups, wouldn’t you?” Hannibal warmly replied.

Will’s lips parted and he watched as his younger self nodded enthusiastically.

“Uh-huh, I’d take them fishing every weekend, and I’d cook for them, and I’d read to them.”

“Would you love them?” Hannibal prompted.

“Yes,” Will answered for his younger self. “But would you?”

The boy looked up at Hannibal with a serious look on his face. “I ain’t going to *amarrer* myself to some *bête puante* . I only want a *bien-élevé beau* .”

Hannibal’s eyebrows pulled together and he looked over at Will, who was smiling in amusement.

“He doesn’t smell like a *bête puante* ,” Will assured his younger self.

The boy laughed and Hannibal looked between the two versions of Will.

“Why are you here, Hannibal?” Will pressed.

“It’s quiet without you,” Hannibal admitted.

Winston trotted into the room and came over to Will. “It hasn’t been too quiet here,” Will mused.

“Am I so easily replaced?”

“Winston doesn’t eat people.”

“He eats other things,” young Will chimed in.

“Run along now,” Will told him.

The boy stuck his tongue out at Will before hurrying off to play somewhere else in Will’s mind.

Hannibal sat back down on the piano bench. “Do you think I would hurt you, Will?”

“I think you would,” Will replied, “but not out of malice. No, you’re too fascinated with me for that. You’d hurt me as an expression of your love. Cannibalism is an act of dominance, but consuming is an act of love. What’s more intimate than to take a piece of my body into yours?”

Hannibal gave him a sly look. “Haven’t I done that already?”

“Not like this.”

“No, not like that, but in many other ways, we are joined.”

“Conjoined.”

“Oh?”

Will smirked. “We’re mated. Our souls are bound and irreversibly intertwined; isn’t that what most people believe?”

“Is that what you believe?”

Will licked his lips. “I…ache for you, Hannibal. I feel your absence in my bones, yet I know you’re still alive. I would know, on some primal level, if you weren’t.”

“Do you imagine that I feel the same way about you?”

Will shook his head. “You *hunger* for me. And I have to wonder if you can find enough nourishment without consuming me whole.”

“I cannot answer that, Will,” Hannibal replied.

“No, *you* can’t.”

“Will.”

Will closed his eyes and when he opened them again, he was alone, except for Winston. The dog looked up at Will with soulful eyes and whined.

“Come on, let’s go out,” Will said, getting up.

They went for their evening walk and Will thought about his conversation with Hannibal. It had only existed in his mind, but he had seen everything so clearly, it felt like a memory.

When he got back to the house, Will picked up the phone and dialed Hannibal’s number. The phone rang once. Maybe this was a bad idea. The phone rang again. Maybe he should hang up.

“Hello?”

Hannibal’s warm voice dispelled Will’s doubts as coffee drives out cold.

“Hello, Hannibal.”

“Will, I wasn’t expecting to hear from you.” He sounded pleased.

Will looked around for somewhere to sit. “I hadn’t planned to call.”

“Is something wrong?” Hannibal asked with a soft growl in his throat.

Will softly smiled at Hannibal’s possessiveness. “No.”

There was a pause on the other end before Hannibal gently inquired, “Did you miss me?”

“I’ve been dealing with my feelings for you today,” Will replied.

The line was quiet again for several seconds. “What have you decided?”

“You’re not a *bête puante.* ”

“A…what?”

“Skunk.”

“ *Moufette* ,” Hannibal corrected.

“My six-year-old self would disagree,” Will smiled.

“As would mine.”

Will moved to sit on his bed. “What were you like at six? It’s hard to imagine you as a child.”

“I was quite precocious,” Hannibal confided, “and eager to learn. Math, science, language; it all fascinated me.”

“Mmm.”

“Where are you in the house, Will?”

“Bedroom. Why?”

There was another brief silence. “I can see it.”

Will closed his eyes and when he opened them, Hannibal was sitting on the bed beside him. “I can see you.”

“Can you?”

“Mmm.”

Hannibal softly chuckled. “‘Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same.’”

“Did you just quote *Wuthering Heights* ?”

“...Yes.”

Will laughed and laid back on the bed. He imagined Hannibal’s eyes watching him. “...Is the house empty without me?”

“Your scent lingers like a ghost.”

“Sometimes I feel like a ghost out here,” Will admitted. “The days blend together until I can’t tell Monday from Wednesday.”

“My days are long,” Hannibal replied. “I feel every hour.”

Will looked up at the image of Hannibal sitting on his bed. There was a softness in his eyes that made Will want to kiss him. But perhaps he was only imagining that look.

“When is your next heat?”

“...Week after next.”

“Do you want me to drive to Wolf Trap?”

Will thought for a moment. He could imagine Hannibal sitting on his bed, but he couldn’t imagine Hannibal walking the floors or cooking in the kitchen. Will couldn’t imagine being knotted on the mattress he was laying on. He wanted his nest.

“I’ll come to you.”

Two days later, Will drove to the grocery store to pick up a few things to get him through the week. He detoured down the snack aisle and was pondering a few of his favorite snacks to eat during his heat when he caught the scent of an unmated alpha.

“That time of the month coming?” he asked rudely.

Will ignored him and put the snack he'd been looking at in his cart.

"If you need someone to knot you…"

"I have a mate," Will snapped. His chest swelled with pride at being able to say, 'mate'.

The rude alpha looked around. "I don't see him. My name's Randall."

Will walked past him and into another aisle. He tried to forget the encounter as he paid for his groceries and drove home. A truck followed him most of the way, which made Will's heart pound, but when it turned off the road about a mile from Will's house, he relaxed a bit. Winston greeted him at the door and Will eventually forgot about it.

Four days later, Will woke up feeling lightheaded and his mouth was dry. His body felt a little warmer than normal and he groaned; his heat had come early. Will looked at the clock and sighed. Hannibal would have already left for the day, and Will didn't want to disrupt the alpha's routine, especially where his patients were concerned.

Will padded into the kitchen and drank a glass of water before forcing himself to pack a bag. Already, his body was feeling sluggish and he longed to crawl back into bed.

"You can sleep in your nest," Will told himself as he pulled on his clothes.

Winston watched Will put his bowl and treats into another bag.

"We're going on a trip," Will told the dog.

Will double-checked the house for any forgotten essentials and took the two bags out to the truck. He was about to go in for Winston when he heard another truck pull up.

"Seems like I was right."

Will's heart sank as the guy from the grocery store - Randall - got out of his truck and approached him.

"You've been stalking me," Will said.

Randall smirked. "Was I?"

Will glared at him. "Leave."

"Why?" Randall pressed. "You're in heat and I don't see another alpha around to help you."

"I said, *leave* ."

Randall chuckled. "That's cute."

Will's heart was pounding but he forced himself to think. *"You manipulated Hannibal Lecter. You can manipulate this creep."*

"You really want to knot me?" Will asked.

Randall smiled.

“You want to make me your little bitch?”

That earned a chuckle.

“Follow me.” Will slowly led Randall toward the shed behind his house. “My nest is in here.” Will silently hoped that the scent of his heat was enough to cloud Randall’s better judgment.

Will opened the door to the shed and his eyes darted around for something, *anything* to protect himself with. His eyes fell on a discarded crowbar; all Will needed to do was get his hands on it.

“Are you trying to trick me?” Randall sneered.

Will did his best to look offended. “How could I trick you, alpha?”

Randall shrugged. “Just making sure.”

Will slowly walked towards the crowbar while trying to make it look like he wasn’t approaching a weapon. He let his hips sway a bit as he walked, which earned a low moan of approval from Randall.

Will pretended to stumble and lose his balance, which put him within grabbing distance of the crowbar.

“You can stay right there,” Randall purred.

Will slowly wrapped his hand around the crowbar.

“That’s a good little omega.”

Will felt Randall’s hand on his hip and he swung the crowbar. It slammed into Randall’s jaw with a satisfying *crunch* and the alpha stumbled back. Will got to his feet and swung the crowbar at Randall’s kneecap. The alpha yowled and fell onto his other knee. Will brought the crowbar down on Randall’s head and blood darkened the alpha’s hair.

Randall fell onto his back and Will climbed on top of him, pinning the alpha’s arms. Will dropped the crowbar and dealt blow after blow with his bare hands. Randall’s nose broke and his shattered jaw only got worse, but Will didn’t stop.

Sitting on Randall’s chest, fists flying and heart slowly beating, Will had never felt more *alive* . All his life, he’d been taught that omegas were weak and defenseless. That his only purpose was to be bred by his alpha. If that was true, why did it feel so good when Will took Randall’s head in his hands and snapped his neck? Why did it feel like an orgasm when Randall’s body went limp under him? Why did Randall’s death make Will feel alive?

Will sat back and reveled in what he’d done until a single, intrusive thought crept into his head; what now? There was a dead body in his shed and a truck in his driveway. If Will didn’t want to go to prison, he would need to act quickly.

As if sleepwalking, Will stripped out of his clothes before returning to the house. He showered twice then grabbed an old carpet he'd been meaning to throw away out to the shed with him. He rolled Randall up in it and drug him over to the bed of Will's truck. Getting him in was an awkward process, but Will succeeded.

His eyes then fell on Randall's truck. That would be a bit of a problem. There was a lake nearby, but Will would need to drain the truck of gas and oil before he could even think of sinking it.

"It's going to be a long morning," he muttered before getting to work.

What felt like days later, Will was finally on the road to Baltimore with Winston sticking his head out the driver's side window. He didn't call Hannibal until he was half an hour away and only mentioned his heat.

When Will pulled up to the alpha's house, the Bentley was already in the driveway. The back door opened and Hannibal walked towards him.

"Will?"

Maybe it was his heat, but Will felt a jolt of arousal when he heard Hannibal's voice. "Hannibal," he said, his voice husky.

"Let's get you inside."

"I need your help with something first."

Hannibal came closer. "I'm going to help you, Will."

"Help me with the body in the bed first?"

Hannibal paused and looked at the truck bed. "Will?"

"A pig tried to attack me," Will explained. "I thought you might want to make good use of the meat."

"I'm going to need more information than that, Will."

Will nodded. "I'll tell you everything once we're inside."

Moving Randall's body was easier with Hannibal helping him and they carried him into the basement. Hannibal then told Will to go upstairs while he prepared the pig's meat for storage. After that was done, Hannibal got the full story out of Will.

"I knew you would know what to do with him," Will concluded.

Hannibal studied Will's face. "You've killed a man, Will."

“I killed a pig.”

“If anyone finds out about this, there will be serious repercussions.”

“That’s why I came to you,” Will mused. “I knew you would help me, alpha.”

Hannibal nodded. “How did it feel, Will?”

“When I killed him?”

Hannibal nodded again.

“Good. I felt…alive.”

Hannibal slowly closed the distance between them and cupped Will’s face. “Your nature is beyond my ability to predict, Will. What you have become has a nature unto itself.”

Will met Hannibal’s eyes then kissed him. The alpha kissed back and pulled his omega to him. Will’s fingers fumbled with the buttons of Hannibal’s vest. He needed Hannibal. He needed his alpha. He needed him naked and inside him and he needed him now.

Neither one fully managed to undress the other before their desire overtook them. Their pants pooled around their ankles and Hannibal bent Will over the counter before slamming his cock into Will’s leaking hole. Sensation overwhelmed them both and Hannibal pounded Will until his knot bound them together.

“I’m yours…” Will breathed.

Hannibal nuzzled his neck in approval. “My cunning boy.”

“...Hannibal?”

“Yes, Will?”

“I want to claim you.”

“Claim me?”

Will nodded. “You claimed me. Now I get to claim you.”

They had to wait for Hannibal’s knot to deflate, but when it did, Will chose his spot on Hannibal’s neck and sank his teeth in until he broke the skin. Blood filled Will’s mouth as he worked to leave a scar on his mate to match the claim mark Hannibal had given him.

Windows

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal work to strengthen their relationship.

Chapter Notes

This chapter was the PITS to write! Between writer's block, having to restructure PAGES of stuff I'd written, and having family visit, this chapter took an extra week to write. Hope it was worth the wait!

After hours of pleasure, Hannibal lay in Will's nest, propped up on an elbow while caressing Will's damp curls. Will's eyelids lazily opened and closed as he beheld his mate.

"Alpha?" Will mumbled.

"Yes, dear boy?"

"Can I keep Winston?"

"The dog?" Hannibal asked for clarification.

Will nodded.

"You may."

Will softly smiled and Hannibal caressed Will's claim mark. "Mine," he reminded Will.

Will mirrored the motion. "Mine."

Hannibal wrapped his arms around Will, pulling their bodies flush. Will rolled his hips, causing Hannibal to grunt. They were both overstimulated, but their bodies demanded more.

"H-Hannibal," Will breathed.

"Yes, Will?"

"Need you," he whined.

Hannibal's hands caressed Will's thighs.

“Need to be full,” Will begged.

Hannibal kissed Will’s throat.

“Need your knot.”

They both knew it was Will’s heat talking, but the desire behind the words was genuine.

“Need my knot?” Hannibal repeated.

“Yes,” Will moaned.

Hannibal spread Will’s legs and lined up with Will’s well-used hole. He pressed in and Will’s breath hitched. Even after so many rounds, Will was still tight. Hannibal rolled his hips and drew sinful moans from his omega’s lips.

As Hannibal built his rhythm, his mind, normally overrun with ideas, focused on one thought: giving Will a pup. And why shouldn’t he? Will had returned. Will had chosen him, marked him. How could he not reward his mate, who had been so alone, with a pup to love him unconditionally?

“Will,” Hannibal groaned.

“Alpha?” Will gasped.

Hannibal cupped Will’s face to focus him. “I want to fill you with my seed.”

“Please, alpha,” Will whined.

“I want to give you a child, Will,” Hannibal breathed, nuzzling at Will’s scent glands. He could smell Will’s desire, and almost feel his temptation. Hannibal had proven himself to be a worthy mate, but Mason’s shadow still hung over them. Rationally, they knew they should wait to conceive. Wait until Mason was gone and they were safe, but biologically, they didn’t want to. Will’s heat had left him begging for a pup and Hannibal’s alpha instincts longed to obey.

“I won’t,” Hanibal reminded Will, “not until you ask.”

Will smiled, knowing how weak that promise was during his heat. “I know, but you feel so good.”

“Our pup would know nothing but our devotion and care,” Hannibal promised, picking up his pace.

“Keep going,” Will moaned. “Tell me about our pups.”

Hannibal leaned in and filled Will’s ears with beautiful images of him waddling through the house, his belly heavy with their first litter. He told Will how he would massage Will’s aching feet and rest his head on Will’s belly to be closer to their pups.

“Y-yes, alpha!”

They were both so close.

“And once our pups are weaned, I’ll give you more,” Hannibal promised, his eyes dark with desire.

Will moaned. What more could he want than a doting alpha who wanted to surround him with pups? “Yes…I’ll barely know what it’s like to not be pregnant.”

They could both see it so clearly and almost hear the tiny footfalls of their pups that when Hannibal’s knot popped and he filled Will, both men were shocked to remember that their family only existed in their minds.

“Soon, Will,” Hannibal promised, holding the younger man close.

“Soon,” Will agreed.

Hours upon hours passed and Will’s heat began to subside. When Will could stand Hannibal’s absence, Hannibal got up and prepared Randall’s heart, kidneys, and liver for Will to consume. He reluctantly brought the meal into the nest, but he made the exception for Will’s comfort.

Winston followed Hannibal around the kitchen without begging and laid down at the top of the nest to silently beg.

“Winston, that’s enough,” Hannibal scolded. “I already gave you some liver.”

Will chuckled and took his first bite of dinner. He moaned in approval, earning a smile from Hannibal.

They ate in companionable silence for a while before Hannibal spoke. “Will you stay here after your heat, Will? Or will you return to Wolf Trap?”

Will paused. “I hadn’t given it much thought.”

“I see,” Hannibal muttered.

“I’ve been too well fucked to think,” Will smiled.

Hannibal looked up.

“I want to be here,” Will continued. “I want to be your pampered mate and to have your pups, but…it feels sudden.”

“We aren’t young men, Will,” Hannibal reminded. “We’ve seen too much of life to couple ourselves idly.”

That earned a soft smirk from Will. “Surely there have been other omegas to tempt you?”

“A few, yes,” Hannibal admitted, “but none have captured my attention or shared my appetites in the way you have.”

Will considered that. “I kept waiting for you to reveal yourself to me. And for that true self to be a reflection of Mason. But, when you did reveal yourself, you surprised me.”

“It’s a curious feeling, isn’t it,” Hannibal said, “being surprised after being able to predict so many others.”

“Is that how I make you feel?”

“Yes.”

Will blinked in surprise.

“What are you thinking, Will?” Hannibal prompted.

“I’m thinking I need you to knot me again,” Will mused before taking a bite of his food.

Hannibal’s eyes shone. “Such a demanding boy. Finish your dinner first.”

Will’s cheeks warmed and he ate obediently.

Hannibal made him wait even longer by insisting that the dishes be washed and put away and then that Winston be taken care of before he would lay a hand on Will again.

“I’ve done what you asked, alpha,” Will reported after closing the door to the nest room.

“Have you, dear boy?” Hannibal mused.

Will nodded and Hannibal motioned for him to approach the nest. Hannibal pulled his mate close and nuzzled Will’s claim mark. Will’s lips parted and he raised his chin. Hannibal nuzzled and kissed Will’s throat, calling soft moans from the omega’s lips. Hannibal’s slim, strong fingers slid into Will’s curls, massaging and gently tugging at them.

“Do you want my knot?” Hannibal asked.

“Yes,” Will breathed.

Hannibal spun Will around so they stood back to front. One of his hands pulled Will’s hips flush against his. Will moaned as he felt Hannibal’s hard cock press between his clothed ass cheeks.

Will pressed against Hannibal’s chest. “Alpha.”

“Yes, dear boy?”

Will rubbed against Hannibal’s growing erection. “You know what I need.”

Hannibal chuckled.

“You know you’re the only one who can satisfy me,” Will continued.

Hannibal groaned.

“Fuck me,” Will breathed.

“Such a dirty mouth,” Hannibal tutted. “I’ll have to find a better use for it.”

Morning dawned and Hannibal nuzzled Will’s throat.

“Mmm…?” the omega said sleepily.

“I’m leaving for work, *mylimasis* ,” Hannibal whispered in his ear.

“My…what?”

Hannibal kissed his forehead. “Your head has subsided enough and you have a good protector to look after you.”

As if on cue, Winston poked his head over the top of the nestbox and lifted his ears attentively.

“There he is,” Hannibal smiled.

Winston barked once in agreement.

“Thought you didn’t want him in the nest?” Will mused.

“Not while I’m in it,” Hannibal clarified.

Will chuckled, “It will be a long day without you.”

“I only have three appointments, so I will be back after two o’clock,” Hannibal promised.

Will nodded and Hannibal kissed his mouth before leaving.

When Hannibal got to his office, he called a former student and current colleague, Alana Bloom.

“Hannibal?”

“Hello, Alana.”

“It’s been a while.”

“Too long.”

“May I ask why you’re calling?” Her tone was mildly suspicious.

“You still specialize in omega psych, correct?” Hannibal replied, already knowing the answer.

“Do you need me to do a profile?”

“Yes, on my mate.”

Hannibal heard the soft noises of Alana sitting up in surprise. “Mate?! Hannibal!”

“Yes, Alana,” he said calmly.

“When did that happen?”

“I would prefer to discuss this in person,” Hannibal replied. “Some of the material is sensitive.”

“I can do lunch,” Alana informed him.

They set a time and Hannibal got ready for his first appointment. When lunch rolled around, Hannibal picked Alana up at her office.

“You were serious about being mated,” she commented.

Hannibal glanced over at her. “Did you think I wasn’t?”

“It wasn’t too long ago that you had me convinced that you would be my mate,” Alana reminded him, “only for you to change your mind.”

“For a time, I thought you and I were a good match,” Hannibal half-lied.

Alana nodded, not fully satisfied with his answer. “Tell me about your mate.”

Hannibal told her the basics of Will’s story and concluded it as they pulled up to the restaurant.

“Shit,” Alana breathed. “What do you need me to do?”

“Mason will come after him. I won’t allow that to happen.”

“So, you want me to do a psych eval on Will in case this goes to court?”

Hannibal nodded. He knew it was unlikely that Mason would allow this to go to court, but Hannibal wasn’t about to risk being unprepared. “I want you to evaluate Will to help me build a case against Mason Verger.”

“You’re going to confront him?” Alana pressed.

“If I wait for him to make the first move, it could be too late for Will,” Hannibal replied. “Mason has powerful connection and hte money to bribe the right people.”

Alana nodded and Hannibal could see the wheels turning in her head.

“Mason has a sister,” Hannibal added. “She could be a good source, if she will come forward.”

It was almost too easy. Hannibal knew from the gleam in Alana’s eye that the seed he’d planted had taken root. If Margot and Alana connected the way Hannibal predicted they would, then he would be one step closer to fully making Will his and getting Margot what she wanted.

After lunch, Hannibal had two appointments before he could return home. Neither client fully interested him, so Hannibal let a few more trains of thought focus on Will. Saving him permanently, sating WIll’s heat that night, and, eventually, giving Will a pup. That last thought occupied Hannibal’s mind for several seconds.

“He will look beautiful.”

Hannibal refocused and when the appointment was over, he did some quick paperwork before driving home. He turned onto his street and all the trains in his mind slowed.

Red.

Blue.

Two squad cars were parked outside his house. When Hannibal pulled up, he understood why and his eyes darkened. One of the front windows has been shattered and an omega slur had been spray painted on his front door. Officers were standing around and were beginning to take notice of Hannibal.

Hannibal parked the Bentley and marched towards the front door.

“Can we help you?” an male alpha officer inquired.

“This is my home,” Hannibal replied, taking out his wallet and presenting his ID. “Where’s Will?”

The alpha officer ran Hannibal’s ID and then looked up. “Dr. Lecter, do you have any idea why someone would do this?”

Hannibal set his shoulders. “Where is my mate?”

“Dr. Lecter, your mate is inside, and you’ll get to see him shortly,” the alpha officer assured him, “but we need to get some information from you first.”

A female beta officer was standing next to the male alpha and she glanced up at Hannibal. “He’s okay. A little shaken up, but unharmed. “

Hannibal relaxed a bit. “I want to see him.”

“Dr. Lecter,” the alpha officer sighed in exasperation.

The beta officer touched his arm. “Let him check on his mate. I’m sure he’ll answer our questions afterwards.”

The alpha officer sighed and nodded. “Go in.”

Hannibal thanked him and walked in. “Will?”

Officers were everywhere and their scents were masking Will’s.

Another female beta officer approached Hannibal. “Are you the alpha?”

“Yes, I am.”

“I’m going to need to ask you a few questions.”

“Where is my mate,” Hannibal demanded.

The officer sighed. “In his nest.”

Hannibal hurried through the house to the doors of the nest room. He slowly opened and then closed them behind him. An overwhelming aroma of scared omega filled his nose.

“Will?”

“Hannibal?” Will’s head appeared over the edge of the nestbox.

Hannibal rushed over to him and climbed into the nest. He pulled Will to him and buried his nose in Will’s curls.

“Are you hurt?” Hannibal whispered possessively.

Will shook his head. “I’m okay.”

“Did you see who did this?”

“I ran in here when the window broke,” Will mumbled. “...I thought Mason was coming to kidnap me.”

Hannibal rubbed Will’s back. “You did the right thing, Will.”

“I didn’t call the police,” Will added. “Someone else did.”

“Did any of them touch you?”

“No.”

Hannibal relaxed and kissed the top of Will’s head. “I need to talk to them.”

Will clutched at Hannibal’s suit.

Hannibal glanced around the nest and found Blue. He picked up the stag and rubbed it against his scent glands. “Blue will keep you safe, dear boy.”

Will softly smirked but took Blue from his mate and clutched the toy to his chest. “Don’t go far?”

“I won’t,” Hannibal promised before slowly pulling away from Will. He slowly exited the nest room and closed the door before calling the officers over. The male alpha officer he’d met outside led the others to him.

“Dr. Lecter,” the alpha officer greeted. “Why don’t we discuss this elsewhere?”

“Here is fine,” Hannibal replied.

“Dr. Lecter.”

“My mate has undergone enough today,” Hannibal insisted. “I’m not going to leave him alone for long.”

The alpha officer sighed. “Omegas are so demanding.”

Two omega officers glared at him and Hannibal gave him a predator’s look.

“Do you have any leads?” Hannibal asked.

The alpha officer fidgeted under Hannibal’s intense gaze. “I was going to ask you that.”

Hannibal pretended to think. “Not too long ago, my mate belonged to someone else. Someone who was not kind to him.”

The alpha officer took out a notepad. “Do you think this was an act of revenge?”

“Perhaps.”

The officer made a note. “May I speak with you mate?”

“His heat is ending.”

The alpha officer sighed and turned to the two omega officers. “Would one of you interview the mate?”

“Will,” Hannibal insisted.

“Will,” the alpha officer corrected.

A female omega officer stepped forward and Hannibal led her into the nest room. Hannibal introduced her to Will then went to stand guard outside the door.

The alpha officer came back over to him. “I’d like to place your house under surveillance.”

“Thank you for your consideration, but that won’t be necessary,” Hannibal insisted.

“With all due respect, it is.”

“I’m taking tomorrow off,” Hannibal replied.

The alpha officer made an exasperated sound. “Can I have a squad car patrolling the neighborhood?”

“I will allow that,” Hannibal nodded. He then asked about cleanup in the front room and the removal of the graffiti from the door.

“I’ll get the window fixed by tonight and the door by tomorrow afternoon.”

Hannibal reluctantly accepted that as the omega officer came back out.

“You may go in now,” she said.

Hannibal re-entered the nest room and locked the door. “Will?”

Will’s head appeared over the edge of the nest again. “Are they gone?”

“They’re finishing up.”

Will nodded and motioned for Hannibal to come closer.

Hannibal removed his shoes and suit jacket before climbing back in beside Will.

Will wrapped his arms around Hannibal’s chest. “Is the meat safe?” he whispered.

“Has that been worrying you?”

Will nodded.

“They didn’t,” Hannibal soothed.

“You’re sure?”

“Yes, *mylimasis* .”

Will relaxed his grip on Hannibal.

“You’re safe, *mylimasis* , I will protect you.”

Will nuzzled Hannibal’s throat, deeply inhaling his mate’s musk. Their eyes met and Will softly kissed him. Hannibal pulled Will onto his lap and let Will loosen his tie and open his shirt.

“What do you want Will?” Hannibal purred.

“You.”

Hannibal nuzzled at Will’s claim mark. “Who am I to deny you?”

Will smiled. “Knot me.”

Hannibal’s eyes shone and hurried to finish undressing; he couldn't wait to get his knot inside his mate.

Planning a Nursery

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal talk about how they can move forward with their relationship.

Chapter Notes

Short chapter! My motivation to write abandoned me and I realized I wanted to change the POV to Alana, but I liked what I'd already written enough to publish it as is. Hope you enjoy!

Will didn't want to wake up the next morning. The nest was so warm and Hannibal's body fit so nicely against his that getting up felt like a sin. When Hannibal attempted to commit that sin, Will wrapped his arms around him and grunted in disapproval.

"Will."

"No."

Hannibal kissed his forehead. "Darling boy."

"You'll have to try harder to get out," Will mumbled, nuzzling his face against Hannibal's chest.

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "Did Mason's actions unnerve you this much?"

Will looked up. "No. Am I not allowed to want my mate in my nest?"

"Is your mate not allowed to bring you breakfast?"

Will sighed and wrapped a blanket around himself. "Let's go."

Hannibal softly smiled to himself as Will padded after him into the kitchen. Winston trotted over and barked to be let outside. Hannibal obliged while insisting that Winston needed to be taught a new method of communicating his desires. Will watched his mate and his dog with a contented smile on his face and a mug of coffee in his hand.

Hannibal gave him a kiss on the cheek and started on breakfast.

"I met with an omega psychiatrist yesterday," he commented as he worked.

Will looked up from his coffee. “Oh?”

“Her name is Alana Bloom. I mentored her years ago and we’ve kept in contact,” Hannibal elaborated. “We need to be prepared for whatever course of action Mason may decide upon and Alana is a piece of that.”

“Mason won’t play fair,” Will warned, sipping his coffee. “He doesn’t know the meaning of the word.”

“Rules have never applied to Mason,” Hannibal agreed. “But he may try more conventional means of taking you from me before resorting to outright kidnapping.”

“...I’ll talk to her.”

Hannibal gave Will a look of approval. “Good boy.”

Will’s cheeks warmed and he looked down, feeling like a bashful teenager.

Hannibal placed an appetizing-looking plate before his mate and kissed his cheek. “When this is over, I would like to take you to Europe: Paris, Spain, and Italy. All the places of my youth that shaped me.”

“But not your home?”

Hannibal paused. “That is the one place I cannot go, Will.”

Will considered this. “There are places that are too deeply connected to the darkness of our past.”

“It’s a pit at the heart of our minds; deeper and darker than we have courage to explore without encountering madness,” Hannibal agreed.

“The night is dark and madness is waiting,” Will mused.

Hannibal looked into Will’s eyes so deeply that both men felt as if they were catching glimpses of the other’s darkness; hearing the dark screams that kept them awake at night.

“May I request a name for one of our pups?” Hannibal inquired.

“Of course.”

“...Mischa.”

“Mischa?”

“She was my sister,” Hannibal confessed. “She was taken from me when I was only a child.”

Will gave Hannibal a soft look. “We’ll make a new place in the world for Mischa.”

Hannibal slowly leaned in and softly kissed Will’s mouth. “Is there a name you would like to give one of our pups?”

“...Abigail.”

“Abigail?”

Will fidgeted a bit. “...I ended up in the foster system for a while when I was nine. Abigail took me in and took care of me.”

“A woman deserving of having her name bestowed upon our pup,” Hannibal said.

Will gave him a soft smile.

Glass Sculptures

Chapter Summary

Alana Bloom goes to interview Will and Margot to build a case against Mason. She gets what she wants...and then some.

Chapter Notes

Murder Wives chapter! Hopefully, this makes up for the short chapter last week.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Alana was surprised when Hannibal called and asked for her to come over to evaluate Will. She's read about the vandalism done to Hannibal's house the day before and questioned if now was the best time for her to talk to Will.

"It is sudden," Hannibal agreed, "but there is a chance you will glean more from Will's distressed state than you would have when he's calm."

Alana reluctantly agreed and drove over. Hannibal met her at the door and led her into a part of the house she'd never seen, despite their time together.

"I only wanted to share it with my mate," Hannibal explained when she brought it up.

He opened the door to the nestroom for her and Alana slowly approached the nestbox. Her heels clicked loudly on the wooden steps as she climbed. She took a seat on the lip of the nest and looked down.

Large blue eyes, framed by brown curls, looked back at her. Stubble dotted Will's cheeks which scratched against the fabric of the plush stag he was nuzzling.

"Hello Will, I'm Dr. Alana Bloom. I specialize in omega psychiatry."

"Hello."

Alana glanced over at Hannibal, who was still standing in the doorway. "Would you like your mate to be in the room while we talk?" she asked Will.

He didn't respond so she looked back at him. Will shook his head a second time and Alana nodded.

“I will be just outside, Will,” Hannibal’s warm voice assured him before the door closed.

Alana focused her attention on Will. “Why don’t you tell me a bit about yourself?”

Will studied the plush stag for a moment. “...I was chosen to be the mate of Mason Verger three years ago. His sire finalized the paperwork and wrote my pups into his will before he died.”

Alana took out a small notebook and began to write.

“Mason moved me from my original nest in the barn to the nest adjacent to his room,” Will continued.

“You were staying in the barn?” Alana pressed, looking up.

“Yes,” Will nodded. “An old pig stall that had been converted into a crude nest.”

Alana’s lips parted.

“When I was moved, I was given three blankets for my new nest,” Will added. “Meals were small and delivered by Mason’s sister, Margot.”

“Tell me about her?”

“She had some compassion for me,” Will mused. “She wanted to help me, but her fear of her brother held her back.”

“How does she present?”

“Alpha.”

Alana frowned. “And she did nothing to help you?”

“Nothing?” Will mocked. “She was the only kind face I saw. The only one who noticed if I wasn’t eating or if I was sick.”

Alana bit her lip.

“Due to how her sire’s will was written, she’s completely dependant on Mason,” Will sharply continued. “If she does anything Mason disapproves of, he punishes her. Forgive her for not immediately risking her life for me.”

Alana looked down in shame.

“But, she’s clever. She found the loophole in her father’s will that could have saved us both,” Will added after a moment.

“...You were carrying her pup so she could get Mason out of the way,” Alana elaborated.

Will nodded and rested the stag against his lower abdomen. “Of course I was. He never touched me unless he planned to hurt me. He’d lock me in my room when my heats came so I

would suffer alone."

"He would lock you away?" Alana breathed.

Will nodded.

"Would he give you any…toys?"

"No."

Alana felt sick. She couldn't imagine going through even one of her heats without an artificial knot to ease the ache inside her.

"I wanted to be free of him," Will growled, "and Margot offered me a way to pull myself out of that hell."

"Then you met Hannibal," Alana said softly.

Will looked up and his body relaxed at the sound of his mate's name. "Yes."

"And Hannibal has been good to you?" Alana pressed. "Has he given you what Mason didn't?"

"Hannibal is my mate," Will declared, sitting up straighter and presenting his claim mark. "He cares for me like the alphas of old worshipped their mates."

Alana shivered and made a note. Her hand slightly trembled from the intensity in Will's voice.

"Mason was never my mate," Will sneered. "He never could bring himself to touch me."

Alan wrote furiously. She'd worked many cases of omega neglect and had seen many horrible things. This wasn't the worst, but hearing how Mason had treated Will still broke her heart. Alana resolved then and there to protect the safe haven Will had found with Hannibal.

"Where you and Hannibal intimate?" Will asked.

Alana blinked in surprise.

"He mentioned that he'd mentored you," Will continued, "but I think it was more."

Alana's cheeks warmed. "We dated for a few months, but that was a while ago."

"Was it serious?"

Alana met Will's eyes; they burned with a dark possessive fire.

"No. At least, not as serious as I thought it was," Alana confessed. "He treated me well, so I thought he wanted to be my mate, but I was wrong."

"Did he ever bring you in here?"

“No. I was never allowed in here.”

Will nodded. “You may go now, Dr. Bloom.”

Alana was a little surprised by Will’s dismissal of her, but she rose from her perch and left the nestroom. When she closed the door, she felt as if she were being suffocated by the house she had once known so well.

“Alana?” Hannibal’s warm voice said, soothing her. “Did Will give you what you need?”

Alana took a breath. “Yes, he did.”

Hannibal regarded her. “Are you alright, Alana? Can I get you something to drink?”

“...Will asked me about when you and I were dating,” Alana confessed.

Hannibal’s pale eyebrows raised. “What did you tell him?”

“The truth,” Alana replied.

“Will is quite possessive of me. It makes sense that he would want to know about our history.”

“To know if I’m a threat to his happiness,” Alana muttered.

Hannibal didn’t contradict her. “Can you build a case off of what he told you?”

“More than enough,” Alana nodded. “If I can get Margot to corroborate Will’s story, we’ll have a strong case.”

“Have you arranged a meeting with Margot?”

Alana nodded. “This afternoon.”

Hannibal asked her to stay for lunch, but Alana declined. She didn’t want to earn another dark look from Will.

When Alana made her way to Muskrat Farm, she quickly discovered that her GPS was functionally useless and softly swore when she missed her turn. Luckily, there was a service road that led to the back entrance of the estate.

The service road spat Alana out near the stables. As she parked her car, Alana spotted a beautiful woman bringing her horse in from a ride. Alana was rendered speechless by the woman’s grace and sharp beauty long enough for the woman to notice her.

“Are you Dr. Bloom?” the woman called.

“Um…yes,” Alana admitted.

The woman approached her and Alana caught her musk. It left her breathless in a way no alpha’s musk ever had before. Then again, Margot was unlike any alpha Alana had ever met

before. There was a shyness to Margot which drew Alana in, like how one is drawn to a tiger in a zoo; much of the animal's instinct has been lost, but it still has claws. The tiger just needs to be reminded of that fact and given the chance to use them.

"Margot Verger," the alpha said.

"Alana."

Margot softly smiled. "Yes, I was expecting you."

Alana's cheeks warmed and she clumsily explained how she'd missed the turn to the estate.

"It can be difficult the first time," Margot soothed.

"I might just come the back way next time."

Margot's eyebrows raised in amusement. "It can be your entrance if you want."

Alana's heart skipped a beat. "Is there somewhere we can talk?"

Margot motioned for Alana to follow her and they walked into the back of the stables. "Sorry about the smell, but my brother never comes out here."

"It's fine," Alana assured her. "What can you tell me about Will and his time here?"

Margot crossed her arms and sighed. "I'm going to warn you now that you're not going to like me by the end of this. I'm not proud of what I allowed to happen, but believe me, there's wasn't much I could have done. Not without making things worse."

"I'm not here to judge you," Alana soothed. "I'm here to help you and Will get away from this."

Margot nodded. "...Mason ignored Will during his heats. He would lock Will in his room and rarely gave him toys to use. He wanted to see how much Will could endure before he broke."

Alana quickly made notes in her notebook as Margot continued to detail her brother's cruelty.

"Are you still reserving judgment?"

Alana put her notebook away. "What would Mason have done to you if you had tried to help Will?"

"Find some way to torture me then take away my money," Margot muttered. "It sounds shallow, I know, but…I'll be even less of an alpha if I lose it."

"What do you mean?" Alana asked, taking a step closer.

Margot bit her lips together. "I live in fear of what my brother will do to me; how could I possibly protect an omega if I can't stand up for myself? And, if I lose everything…who

would want me to be alpha then?"

"Maybe an omega who doesn't want to be a docile broodmare?"

Margot met Alana's eyes. "What kind of life would that be?"

"One with compromises," Alana admitted, "but if both parties are happy, who's to tell them that it's wrong?"

Margot's eyes fully took in Alana before focusing on her red lips. "You'd be happy with that?"

"I would."

"Will was never my mate," Margot clarified, taking a step closer to Alana.

"I know. And I was never Hannibal's."

"You were with Dr. Lecter?"

Alana smirked. "For a short time."

"What wasn't to like?"

"He's far too doting for me," Alana mused, "but that's what makes him perfect for Will."

Margot hummed. "Maybe some good can come out of this."

"Can it?"

"If we play our cards right, we'll all be free," Margot whispered, touching Alana's hand.

Alana shivered.

"I've never met an omega who smelled as good as you do," Margot confessed before leaning in and nuzzling at Alana's throat.

Alana tipped her chin up and her eyelids fluttered as desire pooled in her abdomen.

Margot paused and softly smirked. "I think I'll have to make you mine."

"Not now," Alana cautioned.

"Can I give you a promise of future pleasure?" Margot inquired, moving her hand from Alana's hand to her waistband.

Alana hesitated for a moment, feeling like a teenager sneaking around, before she nodded. "Yes."

"Don't let me pressure you."

“I’m worried I’ll like it too much,” Alana admitted.

“Me too.”

Margot and Alana’s eyes met and both leaned in to kiss the other. Margot’s hand slipped below Alana’s waistband and into her underwear. Two blunt fingernails raised shaky breaths from Alana’s lips before drawing out low moans. Alana held onto Margot and rolled her hips to get more traction.

Margot buried her face in Alana’s neck. “Keep going.”

“More,” Alana begged.

Margot chuckled and added a third finger.

Alana gasped and had to bury her face in Margot’s shoulder to muffle the sinfully beautiful noises Margot drew out of her as she hurtled towards orgasm.

“I…I want to be your alpha,” Margot breathed before finding the right spot to make Alana’s vision go white. “Would you like that?”

Alana let out a high-pitched noise of bliss and nodded. Her body shivered as Margot brought her over the edge, leaving her incoherent.

Margot’s other hand petted Alana’s hair. “I’ve got you.”

Alana nodded again and tensed around Margot’s fingers. “Again?”

Margot chuckled; she drew five more orgasms out of Alana before they both collapsed on the floor of the stable, breathless but content.

Alana rested her head against Margot’s shoulder. “Would you really give all this up for me?”

“It would be hard,” Margot replied, “and Mason wouldn’t just let me leave, but yes.”

Alana thought for a moment. “...What if he wasn’t an obstacle?”

Margot glanced at her. “What are you thinking?”

“There needs to be a Verger heir, right?”

“Mason’s heir.”

“What if there was one?”

Margot sat up. “You don’t want to do that.”

“I’m not going to,” Alana assured her. “All I need is Mason’s semen, and there are multiple ways to get that.”

Margot considered this. “The will names Will’s pups specifically, but Dr. Lecter had gotten Mason to consider renouncing Will as his mate.”

“We can use that.”

“Something tells me that was the plan all along.”

“Or at least, a version of it.”

Margot cupped Alana’s face. “You’ll need to be careful.”

“I will be.”

Margot softly kissed her. “I’m not losing you, Alana.”

Alana kissed back and climbed onto Margot’s lap. “Once I have a Verger heir, I’m not letting you out of my sight. I expect at least two pups from you.”

Margot chuckled, then regarded Alana. She was almost afraid to breathe; this moment felt too fragile for that. If she breathed, the moment would shatter like a delicate glass sculpture and she would be thrown back into her world of darkness where beauty couldn’t be found. But Margot wanted to breathe. She wanted to step out of the dark and not have to count each breath she took for fear that one of them might anger Mason. It was time for her to stop thinking about what Mason wanted and time for her to think about what Margot wanted. And Margot wanted to build a home with Alana Bloom.

Chapter End Notes

I tagged this fic as having Margot/ Alana in it when I started this fic, so if anyone complains, I'll refer you to the tags.

A New Wing

Chapter Summary

Hannibal comes home from work and makes an exciting discovery.

Chapter Notes

I thought I'd have time to write and watch "Our Flag Means Death". I was wrong. Here's a longer chapter to make up for missing a week!

A few weeks passed and Hannibal requested weekly updates from Alana about the case against Mason. The process was slow and Alana barely had any news for him, but Hannibal liked to hear it anyway. It helped him to gauge how likely Mason was to lash out again.

One afternoon, Hannibal came home from work and Will didn't come to greet him. He glanced outside; Will's truck was parked in the driveway. Hannibal took a deep breath and relaxed when his mate's fresh scent came to him. He followed Will's scent towards the master bedroom.

"Will?"

Hannibal heard a retching sound coming from the bathroom.

"...I'm fine."

Hannibal moved towards the open bathroom door and found Will bent over the toilet. Will weakly glanced over at Hannibal before turning back to vomit.

Hannibal knelt beside him and rubbed his back. "Did something not agree with you, *mylimasis* ?"

Will shook his head. "I think we both know what this is, *cher* ."

Hannibal's hand stilled on Will's back. "Will?"

The omega wiped his mouth with some toilet paper and smiled at his alpha. " *Cher* , you're not a *couillon* ."

" *Couillon?"*

“Fool.”

“ *Idiot* ,” Hannibal corrected.

Will rolled his eyes and gently guided Hannibal’s hand to his belly. *“Un bébé* .”

Hannibal’s eyes widened. “You’re pregnant?”

“ *Oui* , *te couillon!”* Will laughed, standing up.

Hannibal’s eyes followed Will’s face as it rose above him before lowering their focus to Will’s soft flat belly. Both of Hannibal’s hands moved to cup the soft flesh which would become round and taught over the coming months as their pup grew.

“Let’s move somewhere more comfortable, *cher* ,” Will mused.

Hannibal nodded and rose to his feet. He walked into the bedroom and arranged the pillows on the bed while Will brushed his teeth.

Will walked in and laid out on the bed, legs softly spread. When he was comfortable, Hannibal crawled between Will’s thighs and placed his hands on either side of Will’s belly.

Will watched as Hannibal reverently caressed his stomach and listened as Hannibal whispered softly in Lithuanian. Will ran his fingers through Hannibal’s hair and studied his mate’s face.

“Have you ever thought about being a father?” Will asked.

“I have,” Hannibal softly admitted. “I was like a father to Mischa.”

“She was very lucky,” Will affirmed.

“She was,” Hannibal agreed. “You would have liked her.”

“Maybe we should name this pup after her?”

Hannibal shook his head. “The next one.”

Will could tell that Hannibal was wrestling with an old and deeply held belief that had formed the moment his sister had been born. Hannibal had been the older sibling, the protector. If he and Will were going to name a pup after his sister, their pup deserved the same protection Hannibal had tried to give Mischa.

“I used to experiment with mathematical formulas that related to time travel,” Hannibal confessed after a brief silence. “Wishful thinking, perhaps, but I wondered if I could make time reverse and create a place for Mischa in my world.”

“A place will be made for her. A place we make, where she’ll be safe and loved,” Will affirmed.

Hannibal laid his head on WIll's belly. "She should be Abigail."

"Then Abigail she shall be," Will promised.

They laid there in companionable silence for an hour. Will ended up falling asleep and Hannibal studied his mate's sleeping face.

In a few short months, Will had put on a healthy amount of weight, gained a healthy shine to his curls, started smiling daily, and now, conceived a pup: all while under Hannibal's attentive care. A low pleased sound resonated in Hannibal's throat: his omega was thriving under his care.

***

While Hannibal was at work the next day, Will drove his truck over to Once Upon a Nest. Clarice was getting out of her car when he pulled up and she waved at him politely.

"Hello, Mr. Graham-Lecter."

"Hello, Clarice," Will replied, following her into the store.

"Are you looking for something in particular?"

Will hesitated. Maybe coming here was premature. "...Baby clothes."

Clarice blinked in surprise. "Upstairs."

"Clarice?"

"Yes?"

"Not a word about this to anyone. We just found out."

Clarice pantomimed zipping her mouth shut and then gave him a thumbs-up.

Will wandered upstairs and studied the various onesies. He took a shaky breath and had to look away for a moment.

"Maybe I'm doing this too early. I could come back."

Will turned to move towards the stairs but stopped. Last time, he hadn't been able to buy even a onesie for his pup before it was taken from him. It. Will had never gotten to know if the pup Mason took from him was male or female. If they were an alpha, beta, or omega.

"This time will be different. I have Hannibal and he will take care of me."

Will took a breath and turned back to the onesies. A dark blue one with sleeping woodland animals on it caught his eye. He gently picked it up and marveled at how small the garment

was. Will then went back to the ground floor to checkout. As he did, a display of yarn caught his eye.

“It’s a good yarn,” Clarice commented, noticing his interest. “I use it for crochet.”

Will nodded and half-remembered something he’d heard about crochet being similar to net-weaving; something his sire had taught him as a child.

“I’ll take a few balls of yarn,” Will decided.

“Skains,” Clarice gently corrected. “I could teach you the basics if you want.”

Will thought for a moment. He would need something to do in a few months when his feet were aching. “That would be nice. Thank you, Clarice.”

She nodded. “My shifts start at four every weekday. I work at two on Saturdays.”

Will almost asked if he would be a distraction for her before realizing that he was her only customer. “Can we start tomorrow?”

“Sounds good.”

Will nodded and paid for the onesie and a skain of yarn.

When he returned home, Will began to wander the various guest rooms in search of the perfect nursery for his pup. He eventually decided on one with north-facing windows. The room would be in semi-shadow all day, perfect for afternoon naps.

“I’ll need to repaint the walls,” Will mused aloud, studying the dark jewel-tone walls. He would also need to bring in new furniture, but that wouldn’t be an issue.

Will was so consumed by his plans that he didn’t hear Hannibal come home and jumped when he felt his mate’s hand on his shoulder.

“What thought had you so enraptured?” Hannibal inquired.

“Our pup,” Will replied. “I was planning the nursery.”

“For this room?”

“Yes.”

Hannibal studied the space. “It will make a fine nursery, Will.”

Will’s cheeks warmed with pride. “Would you paint the ceiling?”

“What an excellent idea,” Hannibal mused.

Encouraged by that, Will began to describe the rest of his plans to Hannibal. In their minds, both built the nursery around them, seeing everything in perfect detail.

“Am I planning too much?” Will asked.

“Why would that be too much? You’ve thought of all the necessities.”

“We only just found out.”

Hannibal studied Will’s face, knowing exactly what his mate was fearing. “Do you have any reason to believe that our pup won’t be born healthily?”

“No,” Will mumbled.

Hannibal cupped Will’s face. “If you remember, *mylimasis* , I was a medical doctor before I became a psychiatrist. A surgeon, yes, but I know how to care for a pregnant omega.”

“...I want this pup.”

“Then it shall be so,” Hannibal vowed.

Will nodded and Hannibal pressed their foreheads together. Will closed his eyes and breathed in his mate’s musk. The familiar scent calmed and refocused him.

“We’ll make a place for our pup in this world,” Hannibal added.

Will moved his head to nuzzle against Hannibal’s scent glands. “I know you will.”

Hannibal buried his nose in Will’s curls and inhaled. Now that he was aware of Will’s pregnancy, he could easily pick out the change in Will’s hormones.

“I’m hungry,” Will mumbled.

“I’ll start on dinner. Would you like to sous-chief?”

“I would.”

They went downstairs and Hannibal made good use of a fresh pair of lungs he’d harvested a day ago.

“A protein scramble, I think,” he commented as he massaged the lungs.

“I’d like that.”

Hannibal gave him a pleased look and got to work. Will sliced fresh tomatoes and told Hannibal about his day.

“I think it would be good to learn how to crochet,” Hannibal said.

“It will keep me busy,” Will agreed.

They ate and went into the library to unwind. Hannibal pulled Will onto the couch with him and read aloud until Will began to drop off. Hannibal slowly got up and scooped WIll up in his arms. He carried Will into the bedroom and tucked him in.

***

A week later, Hannibal took Will to the doctor for a six-week scan.

“Hello, Mr. Graham-Lecter,” a beta nurse smiled. “May I call you ‘Will’?”

“You may,” Will nodded.

“Great! I’m going to ask you a few questions about your medical history before we take a look at how your pup is doing. Sound good?”

Will agreed and the nurse read a series of generic questions off a clipboard.

“Have you ever been pregnant before now?”

“Yes.”

“How old is your eldest pup?”

Will grimaced, knowing that the question had been prompted by his age.

“Will?”

“I had a miscarriage,” Will said through gritted teeth.

Hannibal held Will’s hand while the nurse’s face paled.

“I’m sorry to hear that,” she mumbled. “...Let’s start the sonogram.”

“That’s why we’re here,” Will snapped.

Hannibal squeezed Will’s hand and they shared a look while the nurse got setup. Hannibal pushed up Will’s shirt so the nurse could apply the cool gel.

“Let’s see…” the nurse mused while starting at the screen. “Oh! There we are….”

Will and Hannibal leaned in to get a better look at the screen. What they saw looked more like an alien than a baby, but it was alive and growing.

“Everything’s looking good,” the nurse encouraged.

Hannibal leaned over to get a better look. “Could we get a copy of this?”

“Of course!”

Will rolled his eyes.

“These are precious memories, Will,” Hannibal insisted.

Will studied the image again and nodded in agreement.

***

The next morning, Will drove to the hardware store and picked out some paint samples for the nursery. As Will got into his truck, he heard the sound of a camera shutter. He looked around as a car pulled out of the parking lot.

Ten minutes later, the photos were sent to Mason Verger via an encrypted email. Five minutes after the photos were received and authenticated, the photographer was wired a large sum of money from an off-shore account with the promise of a higher sum in exchange for more photos.

Unaware of any of this, Will spent the rest of the day studying the paint samples and pondering if he wanted to build the pup's cradle himself. When Hannibal came home, he gave his recommendation for the nursery wall color before making a nutritious dinner for his mate and pup.

Will fell into a routine of spending the morning working on the nursery: painting the walls, assembling furniture, and baby-proofing the room, before breaking for lunch. Hannibal had taken to leaving delicious meals for Will in Tupperware containers to eat during lunch. Afterward, Will would relax and read until it was time for his crochet lesson with Clarice. He'd easily picked up the basics, but Will found that he enjoyed talking to Clarice. She and Will were from similarly poor backgrounds, which gave them a few talking points, and Clarice's maturity made her easy to talk to.

"I know working for the FBI is a bit of a stretch," she admitted, "but…it's what I want to do."

"It's something to work towards," Will encouraged as he worked on a booty. "It won't be easy, but you seem like you've got the drive for it."

Clarice smiled at him. "Thanks, Mr. Graham-Lecter."

After two hours of crochet, Will would often grab something for the nursery on his way home; he would then wait for Hannibal to get home.

"How's the crochet coming along?" Hannibal asked as they made dinner together.

"I finished the booties I was working on," Will reported. "Clarice suggested that I start selling my creations at the store."

Hannibal hummed. "There's a growing market for handmade items. If it's something you want to do, I support you."

"I'll think about it," Will nodded. "I don't want to overwork myself."

Hannibal was about to reply when the doorbell rang. He looked at Will, who seemed just as confused.

“Stay here, Will,” Hannibal ordered. He set his shoulders and hid the knife he’d been using behind his back. He silently made his way to the front door and looked out. No one was there.

Hannibal slowly opened the door and his eyes fell on a stuffed, pink pig with a white ribbon around its neck. The toy looked innocent enough, but he could make out the word ‘Verger’ stitched onto the ribbon, so he proceeded with caution as he picked it up. A small card was attached to the ribbon and read; “The Verger Meatpacking Corporation congratulates you on your new pup!” On the back of the card was a copy of Will’s sonogram.

Hannibal saw red and almost didn’t hear Will walking toward him. He quickly hid the pig with his body and turned to his mate.

“What is it?” Will asked.

“There are many sights that I would wish for you to see, dear boy, but this isn’t one of them,” Hannibal gently said.

“Let me see.”

Hannibal nodded and presented the stuffed pig to Will.

The omega took the pig in his hands and examined it closely. Hannibal studied Will’s face and was delighted to see Will’s eyes darken with rage.

“I want to eat this *pig* for dinner. He won’t threaten my pup and live.”

Hannibal’s lips parted. He’d been whispering ideas in Will’s ear for weeks and hoping that they would take root, but this was beyond anything he could have predicted. Will was embracing the darker nature of his omega instincts and Hannibal couldn’t wait to see what his mate would become.

Demolition Plans

Chapter Summary

Margot and Alana decide what to do with Mason.

Chapter Notes

Is this chapter late? Yes. Is it short? Also yes, but it's what I've got right now. Hope you enjoy!

Margot took a steadying breath before entering her brother's bedroom. It had been almost three months since Hannibal had suggested Mason eat his own face, but seeing the end result still unnerved Margot.

Mason's recovery was a credit to their family's money. Trauma surgeons, doctors, and plastic surgeons had all worked hard to give Mason a face back. A face, but not his face. His nose was flat and his lips gone, but multiple skin grafts had helped replace what Mason had eaten. But that had been the easy part.

After Hannibal left, Mason had gotten the idea into his head to go outside. What exactly he was thinking, no one knew, but his drug endured actions had resulted in Mason breaking his own neck. The heir to the Verger Meatpacking Corporation was now almost completely paralyzed from the neck down.

Margot stood before him and took some pleasure from her brother's weakened state.

"Is it time to talk about what Margot wants?" Mason's crackly voice inquired.

"Yes, Mason," she replied. "It is."

Mason made a noise that might have been a chuckle. "Come here. Sit on Santa's lap and tell me what you want."

Margot took a measured step forward. "It's time I settled down, don't you think, Mason?"

"Settled down?" Mason repeated. "Have you decided you want a mate, Margot? They're quite a bit of work, let me tell you. Never satisfied."

"A mate would keep me busy," Margot reasoned.

They both knew Mason hated when Margot tried to interfere in family business.

“I’ll have to find someone suitable for you, Margot,” Mason decided. “I can’t have my sister mating with just anyone. You are a Verger, after all.”

Margot nodded then changed the subject. “That omega psychiatrist is here again. She wants to see you.”

“Dr. Bloom, yes?”

“Yes.”

“Mmm, she’s cute.”

Margot nodded, trying not to betray her interest.

“Well, Margot, would she be good enough for you? She’s helping my old mate, but I’m sure she would fall into line once you two get in the nest, if you catch my meaning.”

Margot fought an urge to roll her eyes. “I’ll need to test her out first. See if she’s my type.”

“She’s a female omega, what else do you need to know?” Mason retorted. “So long as her uterus is fertile, what else matters?”

Margot nodded. *“Pig.”*

“Well, go see her for me,” Mason continued. “I’m not in the mood to hear her questions about Will.”

Margot agreed and went to meet Alana in the foyer. “I’ll be speaking with Dr. Bloom in my own room,” she told the guards. “Mason’s orders.”

Alana pretended to look concerned as she followed Margot through the house. “I’m getting tired of sneaking around,” she sighed when they were alone.

“You and me both,” Margot muttered.

Alana went over to her and wrapped her arms around the alpha’s waist. “I wish it didn’t have to be like this.”

“Why can’t we just get this over with?” Margot huffed.

Alana nuzzled her lover’s neck. “You know why.”

“I do, and I hate that our happiness is dependent on Mason’s ability to get it up.”

Alana kissed Mragot’s throat. “I like when you’re irritated. It’s sexy.”

Margot smiled and tilted her head back. “I get possessive when I’m irritated.”

“I like it.”

“It makes me horny too.”

Alana’s hands slid to Margot’s waistband. “I know.”

Margot hummed and rolled her hips sensuously. “Our mutual friend reached out to me again. Apparently, his omega is getting restless.”

“He is,” Alana confirmed. “He doesn’t want Mason to be alive when his pup is born.”

Margot nodded. “Completely understandable.”

Alana slid her hand into Margot’s pants and took her alpha’s cock in hand. “I want this inside me. I want your knot. Your seed. Your pups.”

Margot let out a low groan of approval. “Tell him I’m ready.”

Alana met Margot’s eyes.

“Arrange it.”

Alana nodded and kissed Margot. “I will.”

Demolition

Chapter Summary

The time has come for Mason Verger to die.

Chapter Notes

Hello! I'm alive! I had most of this chapter written out months ago, but I wasn't fully happy with it. I set it aside and ended up writing a whole other fic ("pitch and time's teacup") before finally coming back to this one and getting it where I wanted it to be!

Sorry for the long wait, but hopefully I'll get back into publishing chapters more regularly again!

Alana nuzzled Margot's neck, breathing in her musk. She felt warm and safe with Margot at her side and never wanted to be without her again. Especially now with her heat coming. Her instincts were encouraging her to nest and to keep Margot close, but Alana knew that Margot couldn't; she had to look after Mason - even if it was going to be over soon.

"I wish it was tomorrow," Alana admitted.

Margot kissed her forehead. "I know, I do too. I just hope things go well."

Alana nodded.

"I won't let him hurt you," Margot added with a possessive growl.

Both women felt the ghost of Will and his stolen pup hovering over them. They'd talked about Will a few times, but never in-depth.

"...I failed Will," Margot admitted. "I won't fail you."

Alana rested her head against Margot's chest. "I trust you."

"You do?" Margot felt a possessiveness for Alana that she'd never felt for Will and part of her hated that. She'd been reckless with Will and hadn't considered what Mason would do to him. *"No, that isn't true. I knew the risks but I didn't care. I wanted Mason gone more than I cared about Will's safety."*

Alana cupped Margot's face. "Stop blaming yourself for what Mason did. Will wasn't your mate. Your instincts weren't fully attuned to him as they are to me."

Margot took a shaky breath and nodded.

Alana hugged her. "You've been a good alpha to me and you're going to be a good ama to our pups."

Margot raised her eyebrows.

"Despite everything you've been through, you're still a good alpha," Alana assured her. "You took a risk with Will to save him. You wanted what was best for him, even though he's not your omega. Your actions helped him find his mate."

Margot gave Alana a kiss. "Thank you."

Alana interlaced their fingers. "Soon you'll be able to claim me and give me pups of our own."

Margot softly smiled at the idea of having a family with Alana. "How many?"

"At least three," Alana said. "That way we'll have four pups. I like the idea of having an even number of pups."

"We'll love them all," Margot affirmed. "Especially the eldest."

Both women share a knowing glance. They both knew their life wasn't going to be easy, but they were willing to try.

"I need to go," Margot sighed. "Need to check on Mason."

Alana gave her a quick kiss. She could feel her alpha's anxiety about what they were planning for that night. But, if everything went well, they would be free.

Margot walked down the hall to Mason's room. She paused before entering. As she worked, Margot looked out at the field that surrounded Muskrat Farm. Her reflection appeared calm, but her mind was racing. Somewhere in that darkness was a predictor waiting to strike. A demon came to enact the infernal deal they'd made.

"Margot, come away for the window," Mason ordered.

She reluctantly obeyed and came to her brother's bedside.

"Show me the latest photos," Mason continued.

Margot pulled out a series of candid photos taken of Will earlier that day. Her eyes darkened with jealousy as she looked at Will's four month baby bump.

"He carried well," Mason observed.

Margot stayed silent.

“I’ve always been fond of children,” Mason continued.

Margot felt sick.

“Maybe, instead of getting Will back, I could bring his pup here,” Mason mused. “Raise it as my own. I could be a good parent.”

Margot kept her face stoic.

“Shouldn't be hard, right Margot?” Mason added.

Margot made herself nod.

“If the pup looks anything like him, I’ll like them just fine.”

Margot took a steadying breath. *“He’ll be here soon.”*

“Speaking of pups,” Mason continued, “any good news for me, Margot?”

“Hmm?”

“Oh, don’t play coy. I know all about you and Dr. Bloom.”

Margot’s alpha instinct roared inside her. How dare he pretend to know anything about Alana. “We’re hopeful,” she managed to say.

“Maybe Margot will get what she wants after all,” Mason chuckled.

“You have no idea, Mason.”

A shot rang out from somewhere in the house, making Margot jump. Mason pressed the intercom button on his bedside.

“Report,” he demanded.

Another shot rant out, followed by a scream.

“Report!”

A heavy thud at the end of the hallway replied.

Mason began shouting orders into the intercom while Margot slowly moved away from him.

“Hell is empty.”

Two sets of footsteps echoed down the hall.

“And all the devils…”

The door to Mason's bedroom opened and Margot's heart pounded in her chest.

"Are here."

Standing before her was Hannibal Lecter, the devil she knew, and at his side, a demon she hadn't expected; Will Graham.

"Hello, Mason," the omega coldly greeted. Blood speckled his face and clothes while more dripped from the knife in his hand.

"Will," Mason said, "how good to see you. Seems you got into some trouble while you were away. I don't blame you, of course. You're a slave to your heats."

Will's eyes glittered darkly.

"I do blame you, Dr. Lecter," Mason continued. "The Bible says I should castrate you and feed your manhood to my dogs for touching my omega."

Hannibal smiled coldly. "He was never yours, Mason."

Will looked at Margot. "I'll keep my promise to you, Margot, but I'm going to make this pig squeal first."

"He's all yours," Margot nodded. "Alana is in my room."

Will approached Mason's bed. "Your guards are dead. My mate killed them for me."

Hannibal rumbled happily.

"It's just the five of us," Will continued before placing a hand on his belly. "Well, six. Soon to be one less."

"You don't want to do this, Will," Mason scoffed. "If you kill me, there will be repercussions, especially for poor Margot. Kill me, and you take everything from her."

"Killing you will be like killing one of your pigs, Mason," Will replied.

"Now, Will-"

The omega didn't let him finish. Will's knife slid across Mason's throat with the precision of a butcher.

"Milk him," Will ordered, stepping aside for Hannibal.

Margot turned away as Hannibal stimulated her dying brother's prostate and collected his seed.

"This way," Will said before Margot felt his hand on her arm. "You should be with your mate."

Margot looked at Will and nodded. She and Will led Hannibal to her room where Alana was pacing.

Margot hurried to Alana and embraced her, inhaling Alana's scent to recenter herself.

"Did you get it?" Alana asked.

Hannibal held up the vile of Mason's seed. "This won't take long."

Alana laid down while Hannibal prepared the equipment to artificially inseminate her. Margot took Alana's hand in hers and gave it a reassuring squeeze.

No one noticed Will slipping out of the room. He walked back to Mason's room and stood over the dead alpha's body.

"Hannibal begged for us to wait until I'd given birth," Will said. "He wanted to keep me safe. But I knew better than to wait. I knew your sick tendencies and I knew what you would try to do if you'd gotten the chance to. Now, my pup," Will put a hand on his belly, "is safe and you will *never* get to see her."

Will allowed himself to smile before turning away from Mason and walking back to Margot's room. He only had to wait a few minutes before Hannibal came out. Seeing his mate, he cupped Will's face.

"How did it feel?"

"Good. Intimate."

Hannibal softly smiled.

"Take me home?" Will whispered.

"Of course, Will."

Hannibal placed his hand on the small of Will's back and guided him out of the house.

When they returned home, Hannibal pulled Will into the shower and scented him while washing away Mason's blood. Will closed his eyes and enjoyed his mate's touch.

Resuming Construction

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal take some time to refocus after Mason's murder.

Chapter Notes

This wasn't quite what I had in mind for this week's chapter, but I had a rough week, so I wrote something sweeter. It had also been a bit since I focused on Will and Hannibal.

The next morning found Will and Hannibal cuddling in the nestbox. Will was curled in the fetal position, his head against Hannibal's chest. Hannibal lazily petted Will's curls and rumbled to help his mate feel calm and safe.

"How did it feel?" Hannibal softly asked.

"Good. Intimate," Will admitted, nuzzling Hannibal's chest.

Hannibal kissed the top of Will's head. "We're safe. No one will ever lay a finger on you again without your permission."

"No one?" Will asked, looking up.

"No one," Hannibal affirmed. "You're mine, Will. Mine to protect. My omega. My mate. But even I must obey you."

Will smiled and reached up to kiss Hannibal's throat. A low moan escaped Hannibal's lips.

"You made me so happy last night," Will praised. "My perfect alpha; ready to defend me and keep our pup safe."

They both knew Will was flattering Hannibal's alpha, but neither cared.

Hannibal's large hand caressed the curve of Will's stomach. "I like seeing you like this, Will. Heavy with my pup and my praises on your lips."

Will looked up at Hannibal. "Would you like to give me more pups?"

"Would you like that, Will? A large family for you to dote on?"

“Not too big,” Will smiled.

“As big as you want, *mylimasis.* ”

Will nuzzled Hannibal under his chin.

“Don’t go inside, Will,” Hannibal encouraged. “Stay with me.”

“Last night feels like something in my mind palace. A fantasy that I’ve constructed so vividly it feels real. But there are too many details. Too many things that happened outside of my design for it to be a room in my mind palace.”

“Savor those details,” Hannibal encouraged. “They’re what will help you remember last night with the clarity it deserves.”

“You make it sound like a memory of one of the dinner parties you’ve hosted that you’ve told me about.”

“There’s an element of showmanship to both killing and throwing a successful dinner party,” Hannibal admitted.

“Will you teach our pup those skills?”

A silence fell between them. They’d touched on this subject before, but always in passing.

“Slowly,” Hannibal replied. “Knowledge should come with age and maturity. I have made choices about how I kill and what I do with the bodies; which trophies I take. When you found out, you took time to decide if you wanted a mate with my tastes. Our pups should join us when they are ready and when they can make the same choice you did. Whether they choose simply to consume or to join me during a hunt is up to them.”

Will nodded.

“Better for them to learn slowly than to have the truth revealed all at once and for it to overwhelm them.”

“Can’t have our pups turning us in,” Will agreed.

“Us?”

Will nibbled at Hannibal’s throat. “Yes, my love. If you would let me, I would like to go with you on a hunt after our pup is born.”

Hannibal’s cock hardened.

“I want to see you give into your instincts,” Will purred, rolling on top of Hannibal. “And I want you to see how well I will defend our pups against those who would hurt them.”

Hannibal groaned and rolled his hips.

“The omega is divine and so is our rage,” Will mused.

Hannibal’s hands slid up Will’s thighs to his belly.

“I will protect my pup at all costs, Hannibal,” Will continued. “Even from you.”

Hannibal met Will’s eyes. “Family is everything to me, Will. To harm something so precious and important to you would be to destroy our family.”

Will purred, satisfied with his mate’s reply. He grinded against Hannibal’s erection, drawing a moan from the alpha’s lips. “You like that, don’t you, Hannibal?”

“Yes, Will.”

“Do you want me?”

“Of course, dear boy.”

Will smiled. “Have me.”

Hannibal’s large hands reverently removed Will’s clothes. “I should purchase some nightshirts for you.”

Will hummed. “Easy access.”

Hannibal opened his mouth to argue, but Will cut him off with a kiss before he could say a word. He positioned himself over Hannibal’s cock and lowered himself down. A low moan escaped his lips as he felt the familiar stretch of Hannibal’s length.

“Alpha.”

“My dear omega.”

“Fill me.”

Hannibal growled and grabbed Will’s hips before thrusting up into his mate.

Since Will was already carrying a pup, Hannibal wouldn’t be able to pop his knot, but he could still satisfy Will.

Hannibal bounced Will on his cock and praised his beautiful mate. “You take me so perfectly, darling boy. And you carry our pup so well. So well, Will. I would keep you like this; heavy with my pups and pampered for the rest of your life.”

Will cooed and moaned in agreement, his eyes rolling back in his head.

“Darling boy,” Hannibal praised.

“Fill me, alpha.”

Hannibal picked up his pace until he spilled, filling Will to overflowing.

Will went limp and flopped against Hannibal's chest. Hannibal rubbed Will's back and whispered sweetly in his ear.

"Alpha?"

"Yes?"

"Bite me?"

Hannibal nuzzled Will's mate mark.

"No, Hannibal," Will corrected. "Bite me."

Hannibal's eyes shone with understanding and he searched for a perfect place to sink his teeth into. He lifted Will's wrist to his mouth and slowly pulled back his lips to bite.

Will screamed in pleasure and pain as Hannibal's sharp teeth broke skin. In that moment, Will knew he'd picked the perfect mate. Hannibal would deliver the pain and pleasure he desired and wouldn't hold back. Hannibal truly saw Will as an equal, if not his superior. And Will couldn't wait to explore that after the birth of their pup.

A New Addition

Chapter Summary

Will's due date approaches and the Chesapeake Ripper strikes again.

Hannibal sat on the lip of the nest box, sketchbook in his lap and a sleeping Will below. Over the past few months, he'd taken to sketching Will. A flip through his sketchbook revealed the slow growth of Will's belly in expert detail and shading.

Hannibal paused his current sketch to flip through those pages. He'd called each of them a masterpiece in their time, only for them to be overshadowed by the next.

"Sketching me again?" Will mumbled sleepily.

"I was presented with beauty. It would have been a shame not to immortalize it," Hannibal replied.

Will rolled his eyes and rubbed his protruding belly. His shirts no longer fit him and his pants rode low on his hips. "I'll be happy when this wiggle worm is born."

Hannibal slid into the nest and kissed Will's belly. "You're making your Oma uncomfortable," he scolded. "That's quite rude."

"Don't eat her," Will warned.

"I had no plans to," Hannibal assured him.

Will sighed and laid back.

"We'll meet her soon," Hannibal encouraged.

Will smiled and pressed his forehead to Hannibal's. They cuddled for a while and Will fell back asleep.

Hannibal went hunting that night and cooked a liver and kidney pie to nourish his mate and pup. The next morning, there was a knock on the front door.

"Don't," Will whined, clinging to Hannibal as he left the warmth and safety of the nest.

"It would be rude not to," Hannibal soothed.

Will clutched Blue to his chest and nodded.

Hannibal opened the front door to find a barrel-shaped African-American alpha, dressed in a suit, a long coat, and fedora.

“Doctor Lecter? I’m Special Agent Jack Crawford, FBI. Sorry to disturb you so early, but it’s urgent.” the alpha said.

Hannibal studied him. “Ah, yes, Agent Crawford, we’ve spoken on the phone.”

“Yes,” Jack nodded. “I apologize again for coming here so early, but we have reason to believe that the killer we’ve been following struck again last night.”

“The Chesapeake Ripper?”

Jack frowned. “That’s what Freddie Lounds is calling him.”

Hannibal rather liked the name. “How can I help? Surely your team is more qualified to handle this?”

“I’d like an outside opinion and I’m interested in yours,” Jack elaborated.

“I’m flattered,” Hannibal said, “but I must decline.”

“Dr. Lecter,” Jack protested.

“Dr. *Graham* -Lecter,” Hannibal corrected.

Jack paused. “You’re mated.”

“And we’re expecting our first pup any day now,” Hannibal added.

Jack frowned.

“I will not leave my mate alone at this time, Jack,” Hannibal insisted.

Jack sighed. “I…understand, doctor. Forgive me for intruding. Perhaps you could assist us in the future?”

“It’s a possibility,” Hannibal nodded. “Contact me if anything changes.”

Jack nodded and gave Hannibal his business card before turning to leave.

Hannibal mulled over this new development as he walked back to the nest box.

“Who was it?” Will asked.

“Agent Crawford of the FBI,” Hannibal replied. “He wanted me to consult on the Ripper case.”

Will sat up and gave Hannibal a concerned look.

“I politely declined,” Hannibal assured him. “I couldn’t possibly leave you now.”

“But you want to help him.”

Hannibal slid back into the next and nuzzled Will. “It would afford me a unique opportunity to peek behind the curtain and, perhaps, learn a few things to keep our family safe.”

“You want to see how long you can play with fire before they notice you’re the one setting them,” Will accused.

Hannibal didn’t deny it.

“If you do that, you need to promise me that you’ll get us out before they catch you.”

Hannibal cupped Will’s cheek with one hand and Will’s belly with the other. “I will protect my family, Will. If they ever suspect me, I will ensure your safety.”

“Our safety,” Will insisted. “I won’t be without you.”

Hannibal studied Will’s face. *“My tenacious little omega.”*

“I will keep us safe. I could never abandon you,” Hannibal vowed.

Will melted into his mate’s touch.

Hannibal contently rumbled and pulled Will close. He inhaled Will’s scent and closed his eyes.

He must have dozed off because the next thing he knew, Will was shaking him awake. “Will?”

“I think my water broke.”

Hannibal sat up, instantly alert.

Will fidgeted and tried to hide the damp blankets.

“I’ll clean those,” Hannibal said. “We have some time before our pup gets here.”

Will nodded.

“While I didn’t study to deliver pups, I do hold a medical license,” Hannibal commented.

Will laid back and let Hannibal pull down his pants to check on the progress of their pup.

“There’s time, Will,” Hannibal assured him. “Let’s get you comfortable.”

Will nodded and let Hannibal fuss over him. Will’s favorite blankets were moved out of the nest so they would be clean and ready for use after the birth.

“You’re crowning,” Hannibal reported some time later. “You’re doing so well. Both of you.”

Will tried to find some comfort in his mate's words, but he couldn't. Everything hurt and he felt like he needed to poop but knew it was just the pressure from his pup's position.

When the time came to give birth, Will swore he would never let Hannibal near him again if this was the result, until a shrill cry filled the air. Everything melted away and his omega instincts fully took over.

"I want…."

"I'm just cleaning her up, *mylimasis* ," Hannibal assured him. "Focus on delivering the placenta and I'll have Abigail in your arms in no time."

Will grumbled but did as he was told.

Soon, Hannibal was offering him a squirming bundle. Will's world focused on the swaddling blanket in his arms; on the red face of his daughter. Will held her to his chest so Abigail was surrounded by his familiar scent.

"Shh…I've got you," Will whispered. He purred soothingly and rubbed Abigail's back.

Recognizing the sound of her Oma's voice, Abigail quieted and made a small, happy sound.

Hannibal came over and wrapped a blanket around Will's shoulders. "She's beautiful."

Will nodded and nuzzled his mate. "She is."

Hannibal kissed Will's sweaty curls. "You did so well."

"Thank you," Will smiled.

Hannibal rumbled and nuzzled his mate. The whole nest smelled of tired, but contented omega and Hannibal couldn't be happier.

Will fed Abigail and Hannibal brought Will something to eat to help him recover his strength. Abigail was placed in one of the built in cradles, so Will could rest without being separated from his pup.

Hannibal looked at both of him with pride and adoration. At last, he had a family of his own and he would protect it with his life.

A Threat to Foundations

Chapter Summary

Will is home alone with Abigail when Jack Crawford comes knocking on the door.

Chapter Notes

Hello! Sorry for the wait between chapters. I've been fighting a bit of burnout with this series. I've got much more planned, but I'm struggling to put it on paper! So it might take me longer to post new chapters.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The night was late, or perhaps it was early, Will couldn't tell. All he knew was that Abigail was hungry and Hannibal had yet to return from his evening hunt. Will hadn't wanted Hannibal to go hunting again so soon, but his mate had insisted on it, claiming he needed to provide for his mate and their new pup.

Will pushed up his shirt and Abigail latched on. She suckled hungrily and Will cooed at her. A week old, Abigail had a few tufts of dark hair on top of her head and large blue eyes like Will's.

"Your papa will be home soon," Will told her. He sniffed the air, taking in his pup's scent, but also searching for his mate's. But Hannibal's scent wasn't any stronger than it had been a few minutes ago.

Abigail whimpered and pulled off to let out a fussy cry.

"Shhh…" Will soothed, rubbing her back, "I know. I miss him too."

Abigail only grew more fussy and Will sighed. He pulled his shirt down and climbed out of the nestbox with her to walk around. Will knew that she was fussing because she could smell his distress at Hannibal's absence and if he wanted her to calm down, he needed to calm himself down.

"He's been gone too long." Will didn't know how he knew that, but he did and he was beginning to worry.

A loud knock on the front door made Will jump and Abigail quiet in fear. Will froze in place, hoping that whoever was at the door would go away. The knock sounded again and Will

wondered if Hannibal had somehow locked himself out and was knocking to be let in.

Spurred on by that thought, Will hurried to the door. If it was Hannibal, he needed to let his mate in before anyone saw him returning from a hunt. However, when Will opened the door, Jack Crawford, not Hannibal, stood on the stoop. Will moved Abigail to his hip and angled her away from Jack.

“Can I help you?” Will asked.

“I’m Agent Crawford, FBI,” Jack replied, “I’m sorry to wake you so early Mr. Graham-Lecter, but I need to speak with your mate. It’s urgent.”

Will’s heartbeat slowed. “I remember you, Agent Crawford, and my mate already told you ‘no’.”

Jack nodded. “He did, he did, but new evidence has surfaced and I could really use his experience.”

“Come back at a more reasonable time,” Will returned.

Jack met his eyes. “I *need* to speak with your mate. *Now.* ”

There was a growl in the alpha’s voice that Will recognized as the beginning sound of an alpha’s Voice.

“I said ‘no’,” Will insisted.

Jack’s eyes darkened and he took a step forward, closing the distance between them. Will bared his teeth and let out a growl in warning. He didn’t know what the alpha was going to do, but Will’s instinct was screaming at him to protect his pup.

“Get. Back,” Will threatened.

“I just want to talk to your mate,” Jack snapped.

“Is that how you speak to an omega?” Hannibal’s voice rumbled.

Jack visibly tensed and Will relaxed as he felt his alpha’s warm hand on the small of his back.

“My mate told you ‘no’, and you didn’t listen, Jack,” Hannibal continued.

“It’s urgent, Dr. Lecter – Dr. Graham-Lecter,” Jack defended.

Hannibal let out a warning growl. “You didn’t respect my mate’s answer, so now, you will respect mine. I will not be helping you today. Perhaps your attitude will improve tomorrow. Goodbye, Jack.”

Jack opened his mouth to argue, but Hannibal closed the door in his face and locked it. Hannibal’s dark eyes then focused intently on Will’s.

“Did he touch you?”

Will shook his head.

Hannibal cupped Will’s face and his dark eyes softened. “You were ready to protect your pup with your life.”

“I was.”

Hannibal rumbled happily. “My brave omega.”

Will’s cheeks warmed.

Hannibal nuzzled Will’s neck and mate mark. “How dare he not listen to you.”

“It happens,” Will sighed.

“Your ‘no’ should be respected as much as mine is.”

Will nodded and shifted Abigail so she was between her parents. Abigail’s tiny fists grabbed at Hannibal’s shirt and she rested her forehead against his chest.

“We were worried about you,” Will whispered.

“Forgive me, Will,” Hannibal pleaded. “The pig was more stubborn than I had expected, so it took longer to display him.”

Will nodded, but Hannibal knew his mate was still upset with him.

“Let’s get Abigail back to bed then we can talk about this,” Hannibal offered.

“Okay,” Will agreed.

They walked back into the nest room and Will finished feeding Abigail. He burped her then put her back into her bassinet to sleep. He then turned to Hannibal. “You promised me that our family would be safe.”

Hannibal nodded. “I did, Will.”

“What if Jack had come into the house?” Will demanded. “Or asked where you were? What did you want me to say?”

Hannibal bowed his head, knowing that his actions had put Will in a difficult position.

“What if he suspected you and was coming here to test his theory?” Will continued.

“I see your point, Will,” Hannibal validated.

Will sighed. “I don’t want you to go hunting again this week.”

“If I stop,” Hannibal cautioned, “Jack might notice that a break in the Ripper’s pattern occurred after he visited you.”

“Could I go to Wolf Trap?”

Hannibal thought for a moment. “That could easily be explained outside of the Ripper’s actions.”

Will nodded.

“Will?”

“I’ll be taking Abigail with me.”

Hannibal bowed his head. “You knew the truth before we mated.”

“My feelings haven’t changed,” Will replied. “But your actions put our pup in potential danger. She deserves a more stable environment.”

Will’s words felt like a knife in Hannibal’s chest. He didn’t want his mate and pup to leave.

“Will….”

Will studied his alpha’s face. “I’m not leaving you, Hannibal. We’ll be back.”

Hannibal reluctantly nodded.

Will closed the distance between them and softly kissed him. “I’ll call you every evening so you can see Abigail.”

Hannibal rested his forehead against Will’s. “Send me videos of her too?”

Will chuckled. “Of course.”

Hannibal gave Will a soft smile and helped him pack. Will packed his truck while Hannibal strapped a sleeping Abigail into her car seat.

“See you soon, *zuiki* .”

Will watched his mate and sighed. He knew he couldn’t run away every time Hannibal’s murderous tendencies put their family at risk, but Jack’s dismissal of him, coupled with his uncertainty of where Hannibal was had left a bad taste in his mouth. Will knew he would feel better if he had a few days to focus on himself and Abigail.

“I packed breakfast for you,” Hannibal said, approaching him.

“So thoughtful,” Will mused.

They embraced and held each other for several long moments.

“Come back inside,” Hannibal pleaded.

“I want to,” Will admitted, “but I need to clear my head.”

Hannibal nodded. “You know what’s best for you, Will.”

Will cupped Hannibal’s cheek. “I love you and I’ll be back soon.”

Hannibal kissed him and they slowly broke apart before Will got into his truck and began the long drive to Wolf Trap.

Chapter End Notes

Zuiki - "Rabbit"

The Beast Below

Chapter Summary

During his retreat to Wolf Trap, Will realizes the depth of his own darkness and how far he's willing to go to protect Abigail and Hannibal.

Chapter Notes

Hello! I'm alive!! Changed the name, but I'm still here and finally, FINALLY updating this work. I've had this chapter rolling around in my head for months, but I was never quite happy with it until now. Hope the long wait was worth it. I have the rest of the fic planned out, I just need to get it out of my head.

Will added another log to the fire and walked over to the bed where Abigail's bassinet sat. He peered inside and softly smiled to find his pup sound asleep, one hand grabbing Blue, the stuffed blue stag. Will laid down next to the bassinet and softly purred. His pup was safe and sleeping soundly, but his heart sank; his world felt so empty without Hannibal.

Will softly whimpered and carefully lifted Abigail out of the bassinet so he could hold her to his chest as he let his mind wander back several hours to the start of the day. The sound of Jack Crawford's fist on the front door still made his blood run cold. Jack had felt so large and looming, like a bull ready to barrel his way into Will's home. Will shivered and closed his eyes to let his anxieties play out.

"I need to speak with your mate. It's urgent," Jack insisted.

Will's heartbeat slowed. "My mate already told you 'no'."

Jack eyes shone darkly. "I know what your mate already told me, but I'm still going to insist on coming in." With that, he pushed into the house, broad shoulders and a wide coat making him more imposing than he was. "I know all about your mate, Will."

"I would hope so, he's a well-respected doctor," Will said, trying to keep his pounding heartbeat under control.

"He's more than that, Will."

Will took another step back, his mind racing to come up with a plan.

“Your mate is a monster, Will. An abomination against nature.”

“No!” Will said forcefully, causing Abigail to start crying. As he tried to soothe her, Jack came closer.

“She’s beautiful, Will. Don’t you want what’s best for her? Don’t you want her to be safe?”

“Leave,” Will growled.

Jack frowned. “Or maybe you want her to become a monster too.”

Will looked up in horror, which gave Jack the opening he needed to grab Abigail from his arms. She wailed and Will tried to reach for her but was stopped by Jack’s off hand on his shoulder.

“You have no right!” Will snapped.

“I have every right,” Jack growled. “If she’s anything like her sire, then she’s a danger to society.”

“You can’t take her!” Will warned.

Jack stepped closer. “I don’t have to, Will. Tell me everything about your mate and you can keep your pup. Isn’t that what you want?”

Will was trembling with rage. This intruding alpha was touching his pup and that was rude. “I want my pup.”

Jack sighed and handed her back to Will. “There. See? No harm came to her, Will. I’m on your side.”

Will held Abigail close and kissed the top of her head before walking into the living room to set her on her play mat. Jack made the mistake of following him.

“Why did you come here, Agent Crawford?” Will asked as he laid Abigail down.

“I know your mate is the Chesapeake Ripper,” Jack admitted. “I want to keep you and your pup safe from him.”

Will turned to him, his eyes cold. “What makes you think we need your protection?”

Jack’s nostrils flared. “He’s dangerous.”

“So am I,” Will said before charging the larger man.

Jack was caught off guard by Will’s sudden attack, which gave Will the opportunity to wrap his legs around the alpha’s chest and go straight for Jack’s throat. Warm blood filled Will’s mouth as he tore into soft flesh. Jack’s large hands grabbed at Will’s shoulders, trying to push him away, but Will’s arms and legs held on with an iron grip. Jack let out a choaked sound

that might have been a scream, but Will didn't listen. All he could hear was the sound of his own steady heartbeat in his ears.

Will knew he should have been surprised by how calm he felt, but he wasn't. He felt alive. More alive than he'd ever felt in his entire life. In this moment, he was a divine omega, protecting his pup and his nest from a rival alpha while his mate was away. Will bit more deeply into Jack's throat and shivered at the thought of Hannibal walking in and seeing what he could do. Seeing how well he defended his nest. Hannibal would ravish him with praise and kisses before preparing Will's kill for dinner.

Will shuddered and opened his eyes. He was back in Wolf Trap. Abigail was sleeping soundly on his chest, safe from Jack Crawford. Hannibal was at home with Winston and they were both missing him and Abigail.

Will licked his lips and was surprised when he didn't taste blood. He knew his imagination was powerful; he'd lost himself in so many vivid daydreams when he'd live on Muskrat Farm, but they'd never been that intense.

His phone buzzed in his pocket before he could contemplate what that meant and when he answered, Hannibal's warm voice filled his ears.

"I made a mistake," Will said instead of a greeting.

There was a pause before Hannibal said, "What mistake was that, Will?"

"I should have protected our nest," Will found himself saying.

Another short pause. "What would you have done if I hadn't arrived when I did?"

"I would have provided the meat for tonight's dinner," Will admitted without remorse.

Hannibal let out a low growl of approval.

"That's why I came here," Will continued. "I've never felt like this before. I needed to… think."

"Why?" Hannibal prompted. "Why did you feel the need to be alone to think?"

"…Because killing him would have felt good," Will breathed. "I would have felt like the omega divine."

"Does that scare you?"

Will thought for a moment. "No. But I think the lack of fear is what scared me."

"You were aware of your true instincts for the first time," Hannibal validated. "A cub at its first slaughter."

"A cub who had thought he was a lamb," Will added. "But now he's…*becoming* something more."

Will heard Hannibal's breath catch. "I have a confession, Will," Hannibal said after a moment.

"Yes?"

"I couldn't keep my promise to you to stay away."

Will sat up. "You're here?"

"Almost. I'm about a mile down the road."

Will went to the window and looked out. "I think I can just see your headlights."

Abigail shifted in Will's arm.

"How is Abigail?" Hannibal's voice asked as if knowing Will's attention had shifted to her.

"She's asleep."

"Good. Put her to bed, I want to be very selfish when I arrive."

Will softly chuckled and hung up the phone. He put Abigail back in her bassinet and softly kissed the top of her head. "Papa is coming to see us," he whispered. "He'll be here when you wake up." Will then moved her to the bassinet stand beside the bed.

Will heard the sound of tires crunching the gravel driveway and he began to strip. Hannibal's silhouette appeared at the front door a few moments later and the spare key turned in the lock.

Hannibal stepped into the small house and was immediately greeted by the sight of a naked Will approaching him with lustful eyes. Hannibal pushed the door closed behind him then wrapped his arms around his mate as their mouths collided in a hungry kiss. Will's hands roamed Hannibal's shoulders, then down his chest, and stopping at his waist band. Hannibal was silently grateful that he'd opted for only slacks and a button up. Will's deft fingers made quick work of Hannibal's buttons and buckles until they were both completely naked in the moonlight.

Hannibal's large hands grabbed at the globes of Will's ass and pulled Will onto his hips with ease. Will cupped his mate's face and kissed him as Hannibal carried him to the bed. Will was deposited on the mattress and Hannibal quickly pressed his body on top of Will's, rolling his hips and nuzzling at Will's neck to scent him. Will arched up and softly moaned.

"Alpha," he breathed between kisses.

"Omega divine," Hannibal purred.

Will caught Hannibal's eyes and their kisses slowed. Hannibal slowly moved down Will's body, never breaking eye contract, even when he was spreading Will's legs wide.

"Feast," Will commanded.

Hannibal let out a low growl and slid between Will's thighs. He took the sensitive head of Will's cock between his lips and swirled his tongue along the slit, eliciting a delicious sound from his mate. Hannibal slide more of Will's length into the heat of his mouth and began building his pace. Will moaned and grabbed the bedsheets.

"H-Hannibal," he breathed.

Hannibal picked up his pace. He longed to slide his fingers into Will's hole to fully stimulate him, but Will was still sore from giving birth, so that would have to wait. Hannibal didn't doubt that his beloved would enjoy the discomfort, Hannibal couldn't bring himself to cause more discomfort to the part of Will that had given them their first pup. The first of many, if Hannibal had his way.

Will's hips bucked, seeking more friction and Hannibal focused his efforts on making Will cum. By now, he knew exactly how his Will liked to be pleasured and how to deny him release until he was begging. Hannibal knew how to edge Will to the cliffside of pleasure and how to hold him there before throwing him off the edge into glorious release. And when he did, Will could do nothing but call his mate's name as he filled Hannibal's mouth with his delicious seed.

Will let out a soft whimper as Hannibal slowly pulled off. Overstimulated and blissed out, all Will knew was sensation. Hannibal nuzzled him and pet Will's damp curls.

"You did so well for me, Will."

Will leaned into his mate's touch and Hannibal kissed his forehead.

"Rest. I will protect you while you sleep."

Will softly smiled and mumbled something Hannibal didn't quite catch before Will was fast asleep.

Hannibal adjusted Will's body so he could regard him in the moonlight. Will looked so pale and delicate; a perfect doll for Hannibal to pleasure and delight. But his cunning boy was so much more than his pretty face and that excited Hannibal more than he could have ever imagined. He had caught a glimpse of Will's darkness before when Will had killed a man near this very house. Now, his Will was a killer on the edge of his Becoming. A perfect mate for the Chesapeake Ripper.

Inspection

Chapter Summary

Jack Crawford is desperate for Hannibal's thoughts on the latest Ripper tableau and attending a dinner party at the Graham-Lecter house is the only way to get back in Hannibal's good graces.

Three days after he visited the Graham-Lecter house, Jack Crawford found himself standing at the base of the Chesapeake Ripper's newest tableau. Of all the displays Jack had seen, this one was the most horrific and intricate.

Jack turned out the gallows humor Zeller and Price used to keep themselves sane and turned to Beverly Katz.

"Any ID on the bodies?" Jack asked her.

Beverly nodded and read off the names of the three people whose bodies the Ripper had decided to mutilate and display in the middle of a park. Jack nodded and turned his attention back to the tableau.

"One male alpha, one female alpha, and one female omega," he sighed.

Beverly nodded. "Any idea what the Ripper is trying to say?"

The male alpha lay on the ground with poison ivy wrapped around his throat and around his wrists, pinning them above his head. His chest was cut open and his heart was missing. His genitals had been removed and red spider lilies covered his mutilated crotch. The female omega had been positioned above the male alpha, as if she had removed his cock and balls with her teeth. Blood had dried on her chin and red spider lilies had been placed in her mouth. A crown of orange and red marigolds adored her head and her long, blonde hair had been arranged in flowing curls. Behind the female omega was the female alpha. She had been positioned between the female omega's legs that suggested she was orally pleasuring the omega. Red jasmine flowers obscured the female omega's genitals and formed a crown around the female alpha's head.

Various organs, including lungs, kidneys, and liver had been taken as trophies aside from the heart and genitals from the male alpha.

Jack had to look away. "Any leads?"

His team shook their heads and Jack sighed. He needed another perspective. He needed Dr. Lecter's experience, but the doctor kept turning him down and the doctor's mate wouldn't let him into the house.

"If they think I'm going to give up that easily, they don't know me." Jack set his shoulders and started forming a plan. Later that day, he emailed Dr. Lecter, no, Dr. *Graham*-Lecter, asking for his forgiveness and asking if they could meet up to talk. The doctor responded with a dinner invitation.

Two days later, Jack stood on the stoop of the Graham-Lecter house with a bottle of wine in his hand. He rang the doorbell and heard a dog bark somewhere in the house. A few moments later, the door opened, revealing Will Graham-Lecter, dressed in a salmon maternity shirt dress and black leggings.

"Agent Crawford," Will greeted, "so glad you could join us for dinner."

Jack nodded. "Thank your mate for inviting me."

Will nodded and asked Jack inside. He led Jack into the kitchen where Hannibal was finishing up dinner with Abigail on his back in a sling. She was cooing happily, and Hannibal was carrying on a conversation with her.

"Really?" Hannibal mused to her before noticing Will and Jack. "Look Abigail, daddy's back and he brought Jack."

Abigail turned her head and squealed happily at Will.

Jack stood there awkwardly as Will smiled and lifted his pup from the carrier. "Did you enjoy watching papa cook?"

Abigail shook her little fist, and the top of her head received a kiss from Will. Will then turned to Jack. "This is Abigail, our first pup."

Jack leaned in so he was at eye level with the small pup. "Hello, Abigail."

"Do you have any pups?" Hannibal asked.

Jack cleared his throat. "No. My mate and I don't have any pups."

Hannibal nodded. "Do you love your mate, Jack?"

"Of course," Jack instantly insisted.

"Would you do anything to protect them?" Hannibal continued.

Will held Abigail close to his chest.

"Yes," Jack admitted. "I would do anything for Bella."

"Then you can understand my anger when we last met," Hannibal said gently. "My mate wasn't being listened to and an alpha was forcing his way into my home. How could I not feel threatened?"

Jack's heartbeat pounded in his chest. What was Dr. Lecter planning?

"However," Hannibal continued, "I now see that you were scared and desperate for help. Help that only I can provide in your investigation of the Chesapeake Ripper."

Jack nodded. "He's very hot right now and I desperately need your help to catch him, Dr. L-Graham-Lecter."

Hannibal considered Jack's words.

"Can you promise me that you will keep him safe?"

Jack turned in surprise to Will.

"Can you promise me that you will keep him safe?" Will repeated, adjusting Abigail in his arms.

Jack gave Will a sympathetic look. Of course, Will would be worried about his mate's safety; they had a newborn. If Jack didn't keep Hannibal safe, Will would become a single parent. "You have my word, Will, I will do everything I can to keep your mate safe so he can come home to you and Abigail."

Will took a moment to let that sink in before meeting Jack's eyes. "Thank you, Agent Crawford."

Hannibal walked over and kissed his mate's cheek. "Thank you, *mylimasis*."

Will softly smiled and rested his forehead against Hannibal's. "Time for dinner."

Hannibal and Will slowly pulled apart and Jack could feel the love between them; their family meant everything to them, and they trusted him to protect it. And Jack meant to.

They moved into the dining room and Abigail was placed in her highchair.

"While Abigail cannot join us for the meal," Hannibal said as he and Will set the table, "she can be part of the conversation."

Jack nodded and took his seat. He listened as Hannibal told him what was on his plate and then felt Will and Hannibal watch him as he took the first bite. "Mmm, good."

Hannibal smiled and he and Will began to eat as well.

Towards the end of dinner, Abigail began to fuss, and Will lifted her out of her chair. Jack's cheeks warmed as Will began to shamelessly feed her.

"Breastfeeding is a beautiful and intimate process, wouldn't you agree, Jack?" Hannibal mused.

Jack looked at Hannibal, who was watching his mate and pup with a loving look on his face. "Yes. Although it's not something I'm used to."

Hannibal nodded and turned his full attention to Jack. “Would you like me to come to your office tomorrow morning?”

Jack let out a small sigh of relief and nodded. He told Hannibal where to park and how to get to his office. Hannibal asked a few polite questions and at some point, Will got up to take care of Abigail.

“Why don’t we move into the study?” Hannibal suggested. “We can discuss more delicate matters in there.”

Jack followed Hannibal into the study where they sat in two chairs before a woodburning fireplace. Hannibal poured them both an after-dinner brandy and they fell into silence as they took their first sips.

“I’m glad we could meet tonight, Dr. Lecter,” Jack said after an appropriate pause.

Hannibal regarded him for a moment and Jack realized his blunder with the doctor’s name.

“The Ripper has kept you quite busy, Jack. Amid stress, it is easy to forget simple pleasantries,” Hannibal mused before taking another sip of brandy.

Jack relaxed; Hannibal understood his situation and wasn’t holding it against him. “Do you think you could help me with this latest display, doctor?”

“I will endeavor to shed what light I can on this killer,” Hannibal agreed.

Jack brought out a series of crime scene photos and explained each one before passing them to Hannibal.

“Has the Ripper ever displayed his victims like this before?” Hannibal inquired.

“Not exactly like this,” Jack explained, “but theatric displays are part of his signature.”

Hannibal nodded. “And the surgical trophies?”

“That’s how we know it’s him,” Jack sighed. “He’s a doctor or has had medical training to make such clean and precise incisions. What he does with the trophies is still a mystery.”

Hannibal sifted through the photos. “Quite a striking image,” he said, stopping at a low angle shot of the omega, her head lifted high above the male alpha. “Have you considered that the Ripper is an omega?”

“What?” Jack blinked in surprise. “No omega could have done this. It’s too aggressive. Our profile of the Ripper is that he’s a psychopathic alpha.”

Hannibal shrugged and kept examining the photos.

“…Out of curiosity, what made you think he was an omega?” Jack inquired.

Hannibal found a wide shot of the entire tableau and showed it to Jack. “The Ripper is glorifying the omega in this display. Note how she’s the focus of the piece.”

Jack leaned in and nodded as Hannibal talked.

“Her crown is made of marigolds, which represent life, death, and divinity,” Hannibal continued. “Red and orange marigolds specifically carry romantic and passionate connotations. Taken together, this omega is symbolically being raised to the level of a goddess.”

“You know a lot about flowers, Dr. Graham-Lecter,” Jack commented as he took out a small notebook to write down what Hannibal had said.

“My aunt taught me when I was a young man,” Hannibal explained. “She believed that a flower’s placement in a bouquet could change not only its aesthetic pleasure, but the meaning of the bouquet all together.”

Jack nodded. “What do the other flowers mean?”

Hannibal studied the rest of the photos. “Red spider lilies are toxic,” he commented. “They also symbolize death.”

“So, this male alpha was toxic and marked for death?” Jack offered.

Hannibal nodded. “Or his reproductive organs were.”

Jack shifted uncomfortably. “What about those other red flowers?”

“Jasmine,” Hannibal identified. “Widely believed to possess aphrodisiac qualities; red jasmine, in particular, represents passion and love.”

“So, the male alpha is toxic and marked for death by a divine omega, who is being adored by the female alpha,” Jack said slowly.

“One could argue that she’s worshiping the omega,” Hannibal commented as he handed the photos back. “Several ancient civilizations believed that omegas had divine attributes. Some even believed that only omegas could make the journey to the underworld and return alive.”

“Is that what the Ripper believes?” Jack pressed.

Hannibal thought for a moment. “I’m not sure what the Ripper believes.”

Jack nodded. He was asking a lot of Dr. Lecter after showing him one tableau. The beta doctor was only human, after all. “Thank you for your help, Dr. Graham-Lecter.”

“Of course, Jack,” Hannibal nodded. “Would you still like for me to come by your office tomorrow?”

“If you think there’s anything else you can learn from the bodies,” Jack sighed.

“I will come by around eleven,” Hannibal promised.

They finished their drinks and Jack got up to leave, feeling much better than when he’d arrived two hours ago. As he put on his jacket to leave, Will appeared beside his mate.

“I apologize for disappearing,” Will said. “I needed to give Abigail her bath and put her to bed.”

“We were talking about private business, so you couldn’t have been in the room anyway,” Jack shrugged.

Will’s lips pressed together but he nodded good naturedly. “Drive safely, Agent Crawford.”

“Jack,” the agent insisted.

“Jack,” Will repeated, offering his hand for the agent to shake.

Jack glanced at Hannibal for permission before shaking Will’s hand. “Goodnight, Will, Hannibal.”

“Goodnight, Jack,” Hannibal said with a smile.

As Jack left, he felt his heart lighten and some of his stress melt away. The Graham-Lecters had warmed up to him and Hannibal had given him insight into the Ripper. What more could he ask for?

Inside, Will nuzzled Hannibal’s neck. “I’m glad he’s gone.”

“You did well, *mylimasis*,” Hannibal soothed, rubbing Will’s back.

“What did he think of the tableau?”

Hannibal sniffed. “He failed to see your genius.”

“You’re the one who put it together,” Will reminded him, lightly kissing his mate’s lips.

Hannibal hummed. “But you chose and slaughtered them.”

Will’s cheeks warmed and he tried to hide a smile. “I did.”

“You were beautiful that night,” Hannibal praised.

Will regarded his mate with lustful eyes. “Show me how beautiful you found me.”

Hannibal let out a low growl and lifted Will onto his hips before carrying him into the bedroom.

Raise the Foundation

Chapter Summary

Hannibal joins Jack's team at the BAU and comes across a tableau he didn't create.

Chapter Notes

Let's just all pretend that I didn't hit writer's block on this chapter for two weeks, figured out how to fix it, then didn't sit down to to actually work on it for another two weeks.

Hannibal reported to Jack's office the next day before he was introduced to the rest of the BAU. There was an electric energy that seemed to follow Jack Crawford around that Hannibal was instantly aware of. Everyone seemed to worship the ground Jack walked on and Hannibal heard them whisper 'the guru' whenever Jack approached.

"He is the alpha of this space, and they all know it," Hannibal mused to himself. *"They trust him to protect them."*

Hannibal couldn't deny that this fascinated him. If he was going to have an opponent in the FBI, it seemed he had a worthy one Jack Crawford.

After the tour of the offices and a trip down to the morgue to see how Zeller and Price had mutilated the Ripper's latest tableau, Hannibal took Jack aside. "I want to give you as much aid as I can, Jack."

Jack smiled and clapped a hand on Hannibal's shoulder. "I'm glad to hear it, Dr. Lecter."

Hannibal spent the day deciding which breadcrumbs to leave for Jack and his team to pick up. It was a delicate balancing act to appear to reach an epiphany, while making the steps there easily traced. And that made it interesting. Thrilling. Hannibal loved it.

"A game of cat and mouse," Will mused over dinner that night.

"In which the mouse is unaware that he is being stalked," Hannibal agreed.

Will smiled. "Just try to be home for dinner every night."

"I cannot promise every night," Hannibal replied, "but I will be home as often as I can. If nothing else, Abigail will get a kiss from her papa every time I come home."

“What about your mate?”

“My mate will receive a kiss and more,” Hannibal vowed.

***

Three months later, Hannibal and Jack stood before a new tableau.

“What do you think?” Jack asked. “Is it the Chesapeake Ripper?”

“I will need to get a closer look,” Hannibal hedged.

“Be my guest.”

Hannibal slowly approached the displayed body; a male beta nurse whose business card resided in Hannibal’s Rolodex at home. The nurse had been stripped naked and hung from the ceiling of an abandoned Minute Clinic by a metal cable fashioned to resemble a coat hook. The pig’s stomach had been sliced open and his guts allowed to spill out, but a few choice organs were missing. A beautiful display, but Hannibal wasn’t responsible for it.

“What do you see, doctor?” Jack inquired.

Hannibal closed his eyes in annoyance then opened them to focus on his current task. “The incisions are clean and precise, but not as surgical as other Ripper victims.”

“Do you think this could be a copycat?” Jack suggested.

Hannibal examined the wounds more closely. “The killer knew where to cut the body to get at the desired organs, suggesting some knowledge of human anatomy. I would say this victim was ‘gutted’ more than ‘opened up’. Although, taking the rest of the display into account, I believe that was intended.”

“Is. This. A. Copycat?” Jack pressed.

Hannibal’s eyes darted over the victim. They had met only once at the beginning of Will’s pregnancy and that one interaction had earned the nurse his place in Hannibal’s Rolodex. Unprompted, the pig had dared to suggest that Will should abort his child because Will was ‘too old’.

“How fitting that this should be your end.” Hannibal paused for a moment then smiled. “No,” he told Jack. “I believe we are looking at a genuine Ripper victim.”

Jack sighed in annoyance and turned to bark orders at Katz and Price.

Hannibal took a few more moments to appreciate the tableau before moving out of the way so Price and Zeller could photograph and dismantle it.

“Do you need me for anything else?” Hannibal asked Jack.

Jack frowned at him.

“I had promised Will that I would be home for dinner,” Hannibal explained.

“This is a Ripper case,” Jack emphasized. “We need to work quickly.”

“I am aware of that,” Hannibal nodded, “but I have had a long day. I will be more useful to you tomorrow after I have had some rest.”

Jack growled but consented.

Hannibal had to monitor himself, so he didn’t speed on his way home. The house was dark when he pulled into the driveway, so he entered silently. As Hannibal walked through the silent house, he noticed a light coming from his study.

When he quietly opened the door, Hannibal found Will standing with his back to him, wearing one of Hannibal’s sweaters and a pair of boxers. Will caught Hannibal’s scent and turned. Abigal was asleep in his arms, a milk drunk look on her face.

“Hannibal,” Will breathed.

Hannibal embraced his mate. Will’s nose nuzzled at Hannibal’s scent glands, eliciting a soft moan from the alpha.

“I saved some dinner for you,” Will whispered.

“Thank you, *mylimasis,” Hannibal replied. “I apologize for missing dinner;* the Chesapeake Ripper left a tableau for me.”

“The Ripper?” Will mused, meeting Hannibal’s eyes.

Hannibal nodded. “His work was exquisite.”

Will cocked his head with interest. “Go on?”

Hannibal described the tableau and watched as his mate’s eyes glittered with pride.

“You didn’t find the incisions sloppy?”

“They weren’t as surgical as previous victims, but I believe that was the intended effect,” Hannibal mused.

Will chuckled.

“You continue to surprise me, *mylimasis,” Hannibal praised, his eyes soft.*

Will rested his head against Hannibal’s shoulder and Hannibal petted his curls.

“I understand your fascination with Jack and his world,” Will said after a quiet moment, “but there are other things that require your attention.”

Hannibal regarded his mate. “Is that why you took my place as the Ripper?”

“Taking your place suggests that I don’t find you worthy of being the Ripper,” Will frowned.

“Or perhaps it hints at something simpler than that?” Hannibal suggested.

“Are you trying to psycho-analyze me?”

“I am trying to understand your actions, Will.”

Will was quiet for a moment. “A four-month-old pup isn’t easy to raise alone.”

Hannibal’s heart sank. How many milestones had he missed? Did Will feel abandoned? Had Will’s heats started again?

“Forgive me, *mylimasis,” Hannibal breathed.* “Tell me about her?”

Will shook his head.

“I want to know,” Hannibal gently insisted.

“She figured out how to roll over last week,” Will said, a proud smile tugging at the corners of his mouth, “and…she’s a little advanced for her age too. She can sit up on her own and she’s trying to figure out crawling.”

Hannibal gave a small, proud smile. “Such a clever girl.”

Will nodded.

“I will speak with Jack,” Hannibal promised. “These are moments I should be here for.”

Will shivered. Hannibal hadn’t neglected him over the past three months, but he hadn’t been around as much as Will would have liked. So having Hannibal around for even an hour more felt like a small eternity.

“Have your heats started again?” Hannibal inquired.

Will nodded and Hannibal’s heart twisted with guilt. “I had one last month while you were away.”

Hannibal let out a small growl and walked over to the phone. He dialed the number from memory and waited as the line rang.

“Hello?” Jack’s voice was groggy.

“Jack,” Hannibal said instead of a greeting. “I will be taking the rest of the week off.”

Hannibal heard the faint rustling sound of bedsheets being pushed back as Jack sat up. “Has something happened?”

“I have been away from my mate and pup far too often,” Hannibal explained.

Jack sighed. “Hannibal, I need you.”

“You have good instincts, Jack,” Hannibal insisted. “You can handle this case without me.”

“What about the next one?” Jack demanded.

“I am not resigning,” Hannibal assured him. “I am simply reducing my hours.”

There was silence for a moment before Jack sighed. “…Did Will put you up to this?”

Hannibal’s eyes darkened. “You will keep your opinions of my mate to yourself.”

Will glanced over at Hannibal.

“That’s not what I meant,” Jack backpedaled.

“It’s late,” Hannibal said shortly. “You may call me back after ten o’clock tomorrow.”

Jack began to say something, but Hannibal hung up before he could comprehend it. A moment later, Will was kissing him.

Hannibal’s arms wrapped around his mate’s slim waist. Abigail was cradled between them, and she moved towards Hannibal’s warmth. “Come to papa,” Hannibal said, taking her from Will. Abigail fussed for a moment before Hannibal rocked her back to sleep.

Will took in the sight of his mate and his pup. When Hannibal held her, Abigail became his whole world.

After Hannibal put Abigail to bed, he crawled into bed beside Will and held him close.

“We could both be the Ripper,” Will whispered.

Hannibal considered Will’s outline in the dark. “Is that what you want, Will?”

“You aren’t the only one with a desire to kill,” Will reminded him.

Hannibal was silent for a moment, weighing his options. He wanted Will to enjoy the thrill of the hunt, the joy of the kill, and the intoxication of tableau assembly – but he wanted Will to cultivate his own desires. To make his own tableaux and not imitations of something Hannibal would make.

At the same time, having Will as a second Ripper could be useful. Will didn’t have Jack Crawford constantly watching him. Will could create alibis for Hannibal if Jack ever suspected him of being the Chesapeake Ripper. But that would also put Will and Abigail in danger if Will was ever caught. What if, however unlikely, Hannibal was ever caught? If Will

was revealed as an accomplice, Abigail would be taken from them and placed into foster care. Hannibal would never let that happen.

“We have to think of Abigail,” Hannibal said. “If we were to operate as one, or even as two, we would need to weigh her safety against the risk of Jack catching us.”

“Operate as two?” Will questioned.

Hannibal smiled. “You have your own urges, Will, your own designs. Why limit yourself to the Chesapeake Ripper’s designs?”

“An admirer of the Ripper,” Will mused. “A fledgling killer serenading the one he wants to impress.”

Hannibal let out a low moan and his cock twitched with interest. “A competition culminating in a duet.”

“Jack would live in fear,” Will smiled, pushing Hannibal onto his back, and mounting him. Hannibal gasped as Will lowered himself onto his throbbing cock.

“It would be his undoing,” Hannibal agreed, grabbing Will’s hips.

“But we would work slowly,” Will added, rolling his hips experimentally. “Jack is fascinating enough to be played with for a while.”

Hannibal groaned in delight. God truly existed; how else could Hannibal explain the existence of as perfect a mate as Will Graham?

Will leaned forward and kissed Hannibal, disrupting his mate’s thoughts. “I need you here, Hannibal.”

Hannibal sat up, driving his cock deeper, and drawing a long moan from Will’s lips. Hannibal savored that sound before drawing more out with a steady roll of his hips. Will’s head fell back; it had been too long since he’d had Hannibal inside him; the stretch of his cock was too much and not enough. Will felt like he was starving.

Will surged forward and sunk his teeth into Hannibal’s shoulder, his body trembling as the warm taste of copper filled his mouth. Hannibal groaned and drove his cock deeper into Will, hitting the omega’s sweet spot without mercy. Will clung to his mate, biting deeper, while his fingernails raked bloody trails down Hannibal’s back.

Hannibal groped at any part of Will he could find. His cock was so full, and Will was so tight and warm around him; neither would last much longer.

“Will,” Hannibal growled possessively.

Will licked at the patch of skin between his teeth.

“*Mylimasis.”*

Will's teeth tore at Hannibal's skin and Hannibal's knot popped. Hannibal moaned and held onto Will as he filled him. It was impossible for Will to get pregnant outside of his heat, but Hannibal momentarily allowed himself to imagine that Will was now carrying a new pup.

As his orgasm subsided, Hannibal raised his head to look at Will. What he saw made him smile. Will's mouth and chin were covered in blood and dangling from Will's teeth was a chunk of Hannibal's flesh. Seeing that Hannibal's eyes were on him, Will pulled the skin into his mouth and consumed it.

Storm Damage

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal anxiously await the birth of twins.

Chapter Notes

Three year time jump from last chapter.

A cool autumn breeze ruffled Will's hair as he sat on a park bench, watching Abigail as she ran around the playground with a boy about her age. The blond-haired boy tackled Abigail, bringing her to the ground. Will sighed and waited for what would come next. Abigail wiggled out from under the boy and came running to Will with tears in her eyes and blood on her chin.

"Daddy!" she wailed.

"She's lying!" the boy shouted, running after her.

Will glanced to his left and met Margot and Alana's eyes. So much for a friendly playdate.

"Come here, Abby," Will encouraged.

She sniffed and obeyed, submitting to Will's examination of her three-year-old body. The blood was coming from her bottom lip where she'd bitten it as she hit the ground. Will grabbed some napkins from the toddler bag and cleaned her up.

"Is she okay?" Alana asked. Her face was a little flushed from scolding her son.

"She'll be okay," Will replied, keeping his eyes on his daughter. "She's a tough girl, right?"

Abigail nodded then glared at the boy who had tackled her. Nigel Verger held up his fists in retaliation before a sharp look from Margot made him put them down.

"Sorry, mama," he mumbled to her.

"I think we should go," Alana suggested.

"But we weren't done playing!" Abigail protested.

“Yeah!” Nigel chimed in.

The three adults looked at each other.

“Why don’t you go get snow cones?” Will suggested, pointing to the small nearby stand. “It will make your lip feel better, Abby. Then you and Nigel can play for thirty more minutes before we go home to make dinner for papa.”

Abigail nodded and looked at Nigel who was already pulling at Alana’s hand.

“I’ll take them,” Alana said before taking the two three-year-olds to the snow cone stand.

Margot sat on the bench with Will and they watched Alana and the kids go.

“You seem to be doing well,” Margot mused, glancing at Will and then at his stomach.

“I am,” Will replied, rubbing his swollen belly. He was glad it was finally cooling off; being pregnant in the summer had been miserable.

“How much longer?” Margot prompted.

“A few more weeks before I go in for a cesarean. My doctor feels that would be safer for me and the twins.”

Margot blinked. “Twins?”

Will smiled at her and nodded.

Twins were rarer among alpha/omega couples than they were for beta couples. Many cultures throughout history had believed that twins were a sign that an alpha and omega were soulmates. Will joked that Hannibal just had strong swimmers.

“Congratulations,” Margot said before looking over at Alana.

“Are you and Alana going to try for another one?” Will gently asked.

Margot smirked. “I think Nigel is enough for now.”

Will nodded. He could feel Margot’s internal struggle when she looked at Nigel. She loved him, but he was also her brother’s child and the only reason she still had access to the Verger fortune. So much rested on the shoulders of that strong-willed three-year-old that he wasn’t fully aware of.

“Do you think he’ll hate me?” Margot whispered.

Will looked at her.

“I’m technically his aunt, how messed up is that?” Margot scoffed. “And I know my family will try to use him, just like they used me and Mason.”

Will found himself putting a hand on hers. “For now, I think all he cares about is if you love him or not.”

Margot nodded. “I do. I just worry.”

“He’ll pick up on that,” Will cautioned. “Better to show him that you love him more than you fear him turning against you.”

Margot studied Will’s face. “Is that what you do with Hannibal?”

Will opened his mouth to reply but was cut off by Abigail running towards him. “I got a grape one!”

“And she made me carry it,” Alana added as she and Nigel joined them.

“Papa says not to run with food in your hand,” Abigal retorted before reaching for her snow cone.

“And we know how papa feels about food,” Will mused, patting Abigail’s head.

Nigel sat on the other side of Margot and leaned his head against her arm while he ate.

“Nye, you’ll get snow cone all over mama,” Alana gently corrected.

“It’s fine,” Margot smiled, looking down at Nigel.

He beamed up at her with red syrup all over his mouth. “I love you, mama.”

Will saw Margot’s eyes shine.

“Love you too, Nye,” Margot replied, kissing the top of his head.

When it was time to go, Abigail waved to Nigel before taking Will’s hand as they walked to his truck.

“How’s my baby sister?” Abigail asked as Will buckled her in.

“Or baby brother,” Will reminded her. “Kicking up a storm because they’re excited to meet you.”

Abigail wiggled happily and Will wondered how long this enthusiasm would last once the twins were born.

They drove home and Abigail helped Will make dinner. Spaghetti wasn’t difficult for a three-year-old to make, but it took even longer since Hannibal insisted that everything be made from scratch.

“I think I hear papa,” Will said after they had cleaned up from making the sauce.

Abigail ran to the back door, which Winston also considered, but decided staying with Will was more important. The door opened and Hannibal’s legs were quickly encircled by

Abigal's arms.

"Papa! You're home," she beamed.

"I am at that," Hannibal replied before kneeling to hug her. "How was your day, Abigail?"

Abigail's face lit up and she began recounting her day. Hannibal took her hand and they walked into the kitchen where Hannibal gave Will a kiss on the mouth and belly.

"*Papa*," Abigail scolded, "you're not listening."

Hannibal turned to her. "You're right, *zuiki*, I was not facing you while you spoke. How rude of me, please continue. The last thing I remember is Nigel pushing you down at the park."

Abigail accepted his apology and continued her story. "…and then you came home!"

"You had a busy day," Hannibal commented.

Abigail nodded. "Is my lip going to be okay?" Ever since she had found out that Hannibal was a doctor, all injuries had needed his examination.

Hannibal directed her to the dining room and had her sit in a chair so he could examine her lip. "In my professional opinion, you will be fine, Abigail."

She smiled at him. "Thank you, papa."

"You're welcome, now, would you mind setting the table?"

Abigail slid out of the chair and went to get the silverware while Hannibal wandered back into the kitchen to check on Will.

Hannibal slide his arms around Will from behind, cradling Will's swollen belly. "They're kicking again."

"They do it more when you're around," Will sighed, leaning against his mate.

Hannibal kissed Will's cheek. "They recognize my voice."

"You talk to them enough," Will smirked.

Hannibal began to say something about the importance of pups hearing their sire's voice when a loud clattering of metal drew his and Will's attention. Abigail was standing in the doorway, silverware at her feet and tears in her eyes.

Will instinctually pulled away from Hannibal to get closer to Abigail. "What's wrong, Abby?"

"Y-You and papa don't love me!" Abigail hiccupped.

"Abby…" Will breathed.

“Why do you believe that Abigail?” Hannibal prompted.

Will closed his eyes; now wasn’t the time for psychoanalysis.

“You love the babies more than me,” Abigail accused. “You’d be happier if I wasn’t here!”

Will knew his daughter was speaking from a place of uncertainty and childish ignorance, but her world still stung. “Abigail, that’s not true. Papa and I love you every much.”

“But you’re having two babies,” Abigail argued, stamping her foot. “You won’t need me.”

“Of course, we’ll need you,” Will assured her.

“Our love for you has not diminished,” Hannibal agreed.

Abigail glared at Hannibal. “Don’t use big words!”

Will found himself smiling at his mate being scolded by their pup, but Abigail didn’t see it that way.

“You’re smiling, that means you’re lying!” she accused.

“No, Abby, that’s not why-”

Abigail turned and ran down the hall.

Will sighed and slowly got to his feet while Hannibal turned to check on dinner.

BANG.

Will and Hannibal froze, and Winston barked. That wasn’t the sound of Abigial slamming her bedroom door, it was the sound of the front door hitting the wall.

Hannibal turned to turn off the stove top and when he looked back, Will was running down the hall.

“Will!”

Will didn’t look back. Panting for air, he paused at the front door to look around. Abigial was half-way down the street.

“ABIGAIL!” Will shouted.

She froze for a moment and Will clutched his belly as he came down the front steps. He could hear Hannibal behind him, but he didn’t stop.

“Abigail Graham-Lecter,” Will growled.

Abigail’s pace slowed, but she didn’t stop and began to cross the narrow street.

Will was huffing and puffing, but he continued to march towards his daughter. Hannibal was somewhere behind him, but Will only knew the pounding of his heart in his ears and the sight of his daughter.

“Abigail. Simonetta. Graham-Lecter,” Will snapped.

Abigail stopped dead in her tracks and turned to look at Will with large doe eyes. Somewhere behind Will, Hannibal froze too.

Simonetta – Abigail’s long discussed middle name, had once belonged to Hannibal’s mother.

Will advanced towards his daughter, who stood frozen in the middle of the street, with one hand on his belly. “Get inside. Now.”

Tears poured out of Abigail’s eyes and an almost unintelligible wail of, “I’m sorry, daddy” filled the air. Will grabbed her arm and pulled her closer to one of the parked cars.

“Abigail, I’m sorry papa and I made you feel like we didn’t love you,” Will said. He would have leaned over, but he felt like he would fall over if he did.

“We love you very much, Abigail,” said Hannibal, who had appeared on the sidewalk on the other side of the car Will had pulled Abigail to.

“We wouldn’t have run after you if we didn’t love you,” Will added.

Abigail nodded and wiped her tears on her sleeve.

“Let’s go home,” Will said, taking a step back so Abigail could walk around the car.

Lights flashed in Will’s peripheral vision. Something struck his side. Hannibal yelled. Abigail screamed. Will felt his body spin, then he was on the ground.

Abigail was still screaming.

Hannibal was talking rapidly.

Will’s thighs were wet.

“My water broke.”

Damage and New Wings

Chapter Summary

Hannibal worries about Will after his accident.

Chapter Notes

I can feel another hiatus creeping up on me, but I had to make sure I posted this chapter first!!

Abigail had finally worn herself out from crying and was asleep in Hannibal's arms. He was glad of the chair he was sitting in, otherwise he feared he might drop her. Outside, the sky was beginning to lighten, but Hannibal felt like he had been awake for days. Hannibal closed his eyes and wearily stepped into his memory palace.

Will was waiting for him, dressed in the shirt and slacks Hannibal liked best.

"Hannibal."

"Will."

Hannibal wrapped his arms around Will and held him tight, breathing in the familiar scent of his omega.

"What's wrong?" Will inquired.

"You're hurt. A reckless, idiotic driver struck you with his car."

Will's hug tightened.

"You went into labor."

Will pulled back to look at Hannibal's face. "The twins?"

"Emergency caesarian. Your pelvis was fractured."

Will rested his head on Hannibal's shoulder and made a soothing noise in his throat. Hannibal recognized the calming purr from Will using it on Abigail, but also subconsciously from his own mother. Hannibal's body relaxed and he melted into Will.

“You’ve been so strong tonight,” Will validated. “A good alpha; protecting his mate and pups.”

Hannibal nodded.

“Get some sleep, Hannibal.”

Hannibal opened his eyes enough to make out Will’s sleeping form in the hospital bed before succumbing to sleep.

Beep.

Beep.

Beep.

The sound of the heart monitor and the rough sheets of a hospital bed told Will where he was before he opened his eyes. Sunlight illuminated the blinds to Will’s left, but he couldn’t tell if it was morning or afternoon. He stared blankly at the blinds for a moment before looking to his right. When he did, he softly smiled. Hannibal sat in a chair at his bedside with Abigail on his lap. Her head was resting under his chin, and they were both asleep.

Will regarded them for a moment before turning his attention to his own body. His right arm had several bandages on it, his right leg was in a cast, and the right side of his pelvis had a dull ache to it. None of that phased Will very much, especially after a cold realization of his empty womb washed over him.

Hannibal stirred and opened his eyes. “Will,” he whispered.

“The twins…” Will whimpered.

“They’re alive, Will,” Hannibal assured him. “Safe and sound in the NICU.”

Will laid his head back and breathed a sigh of relief. “What happened?”

Hannibal sat up and Abigail shifted in her sleep. “You were struck by a car which caused you to go into labor. Your right leg is broken in several places and your pelvis is fractured, along with a several bruises and small cuts.”

Will laid his head back and nodded.

“In my medical opinion, you will make a full recovery,” Hannibal concluded.

Will softly smiled then focused on Abigail. “How much did she see?”

“More than I would have liked,” Hannibal admitted. “She saw the impact before I could cover her eyes, however, I doubt she fully understands what she saw.”

Will sighed. “She will eventually.”

“Your surgery and its aftermath distressed her far more,” Hannibal admitted. “She wouldn’t agree to go home until she had seen you.”

Will looked at his sleeping pup. Tear tracks stained her cheeks, and she was holding Hannibal’s jacket in a death grip, even in her sleep.

“Clinging to her alpha for protection,” Will mused.

Hannibal lifted his chin with pride.

“Abby,” Will softly called.

Hannibal rubbed her back. “Wake up, *zuiki*, daddy is awake.”

Abigail reluctantly stirred and rubbed her eyes. “Hmm?”

“Daddy’s awake,” Hannibal repeated.

Abigail sleepily turned her head. “Daddy…you’re okay.”

“I am, baby,” Will assured her. “I’ve got a few boo-boos, so they’re going to keep me here for a little bit so I can get better, then I’ll be home with you and papa.”

Abigail nodded and yawned. “That sounds…nice.”

“Tuckered yourself out, huh, *cher*?” Will mused, letting his natural accent come out.

Abigail nodded emphatically.

“Why don’t you and papa go home,” Will suggested. “You can come back tomorrow and see me.”

“Okay…” Abigail yawned.

Hannibal brought her over and Will kissed her forehead. “See you tomorrow.”

Abigail nodded and Hannibal softly kissed Will before carrying Abigail down to his car. She slept the whole ride home and didn’t stir when Hannibal lifted her out of her car seat and brought her into the house. After a moment’s consideration, Hannibal brought her into his and Will’s room and tucked her in on Will’s side of the bed.

***

The next afternoon, Abigail insisted on bringing Bit with her to the hospital.

“Daddy needs him,” she said before walking to the car.

Hannibal raised his eyebrows but finished packing her toddler bag and followed her.

After checking in, Hannibal pointed Abigail to Will’s room and stayed behind to speak with the nurse.

“He’s been responding well,” the nurse told him. “His doctor wants to keep him here for a day or two more to be safe.”

Hannibal nodded. “I was a surgeon for several years; I’ll see to it that he’s given proper care when he’s discharged.”

Down the hall, Abigail stood to the side of Will’s door and stuck her arm out, so Bit appeared in the doorway.

“Bit, have you come to visit me?” Will’s voice gently inquired.

Abigail made Bit nod.

“That’s very thoughtful of you. Did you bring Abigail with you?”

Bit nodded.

“…Is she a little nervous about seeing me?”

Bit nodded again.

“Hmm, could you tell Abby something for me? Tell her that daddy loves her very much.”

Bit disappeared from Will’s view. A moment later, Abigail appeared, holding Bit to her chest. “I love you too, daddy, and I promise I’ll be good.”

Will blinked back tears. “Come here, baby. You can lie right here next to me.”

Abigail sped-walked over to the bed and snuggled against Will’s left side. He petted her hair and soothed her when she began to cry.

“He was worried about you,” Abigail mumbled, holding up Bit after her tears had dried.

Will looked at Bit’s worn button eyes. “You don’t need to worry about me anymore. I’m going to get better and then this will be like a memory of a bad dream; scary, but it can’t hurt us anymore.”

Bit’s head bowed in deep thought before Abigail sat up and sat him on Will’s lap. “Today has been a mixed-up day,” she said.

“Really?” Will said encouragingly. “How so?”

“We had breakfast for lunch,” Abigail reported.

“You did? Did you sleep late?”

“Uh-huh, and papa did too!”

“You must have been very tired.”

Abigail nodded then went quiet. “…Dad, are you mad at me?”

“No, baby,” Will promised. “Your emotions were too big, so running away felt like a good idea. Because I love you, I went after you to make sure you were safe. I was so focused on making sure that you were safe that I forgot to look for cars.”

Abigail nodded.

“That’s why papa and I tell you to look for cars when we go out, so you don’t get hurt,” Will concluded.

“I won’t forget ever again,” Abigail vowed.

“That’s my girl,” Will smiled, giving her forehead a kiss.

Hannibal stepped into the room and came over to give Will a kiss. “Would you like to meet the twins?”

Will looked at Abigail. “Are you ready to meet your siblings?”

“Yes.”

Will smiled and Hannibal told Abigail how to interact with her newborn siblings.

A few moments later, two nurses arrived pushing identical clear containers. Inside were two tiny babies; one wore a blue hat and the other a pink one. Hannibal led Abigail over to them so she could look.

“This is your baby brother,” Hannibal said as Abigail looked at the baby with the blue hat. “And this is your baby sister,” he added when she looked at the other one.

“Do they have names?” Abigail asked.

“Not yet,” Hannibal said. “Daddy and I had names picked out, but since daddy was in surgery, I decided to wait to name them.”

“Well, why don’t we take care of that?” one of the nurses suggested, sending the other to get the paperwork.

“Can I hold them?” Will inquired.

The first nurse nodded and brought over the baby girl. “She’s the older twin.”

Will looked down at her then up at Hannibal. “Mischa.”

Hannibal blinked in surprise. “I thought we had decided on-?”

“I changed my mind,” Will smiled.

“Then ‘Mischa’ she will be.”

The other nurse returned with the birth certificates. Hannibal went over to her while the first nurse brought over the baby boy.

“Adam,” Will said.

Abigail stared at her twin siblings with wide eyed wonder. “They’re so small. Was I that small?”

“No, Abby,” Will told her, “Mischa and Adam were born early, so they’re smaller than you were.”

Abigail nodded. “Is that why they can’t come home with us?”

“Yes, Abigail,” Hannibal confirmed, coming over to look at his new pups. “They need to get bigger before they can come home.”

Abigail nodded again then grabbed Bit and began to play near the window.

“Would you like to hold Mischa?” Will asked Hannibal.

The alpha nodded and took her into his arms as if she was made of glass. “Hello…Mischa.”

Will studied Hannibal’s face. His mate’s eyes were soft, and he looked at Mischa as if she were a long-lost jewel.

“How old were you when your sister was born?” Will gently asked.

“Five, almost six,” Hannibal replied after a brief silence.

“Wait, papa has a sister?” Abigail exclaimed.

Will shot Hannibal an apologetic look.

“I had a sister,” Hannibal corrected. “Her name was Mischa.”

“Never heard of her,” Abigail said confidently.

Will and Hannibal smirked at her childish belief that she knew everyone.

After some time, the nurses took Mischa and Adam back to the NICU and Hannibal told Abigail that it was time to leave as well.

“Why?” Abigail whined.

“Daddy needs a nap,” Will chimed in before Hannibal could reply. “And, I have a special job for you.”

Hannibal raised an eyebrow.

“You do?”

Will nodded. “You know how Blue is your special toy?”

Abigail nodded.

“Well, Mischa and Adam need special toys too,” Will continued.

“We could get some from Lari!” Abigail exclaimed. “Lari has lots of toys!”

“I’m sure *Clarice* would love to help you pick out a toy for Mischa and a toy for Adam,” Will smiled.

Abigail turned to look at Hannibal. “Can we go now?”

Hannibal checked the time. “Yes, we can, and then we’ll go home for dinner.”

Abigail grabbed Hannibal’s hand and pulled. “Let’s go!”

“I would like to say good-bye to daddy first,” Hannibal mildly protested.

Abigail sighed and let go of him.

“Love it when you call me ‘daddy’,” Will whispered in Hannibal’s ear before kissing him.

Hannibal chuckled and reluctantly left his mate to rest.

Abigail grabbed Hannibal’s hand. “Can we come back and see daddy, and Mischa, and Adam tomorrow?”

“Of course, *zuiki*,” Hannibal promised.

***

The shop bell rang as Abigail pushed open the door to Once Upon a Nest.

“Clarice?”

“Is that Abigail?” a familiar voice called.

“It is!”

Clarice walked around the side of the counter and Abigail gave her a hug.

“Papa and I are looking for a toy for Mischa and Adam,” Abigail announced.

Clarice nodded. “Toys are upstairs.”

Abigail took off and Clarice stood up to greet Hannibal.

“Mischa and Adam?”

“Our new pups,” Hannibal explained. “They had to be delivered early after Will’s accident.

Clarice lowered her eyes. “I heard about it. I’m glad Will’s okay. How’s Abby?”

“She is coping to the best of her ability,” Hannibal replied.

Clarice nodded. “If you need me to babysit, I can make the time.”

“Thank you, Clarice.”

A moment later, Abigail returned with two plush toys: a brown teddy bear and a raccoon.

“This one is for Mischa,” Abigail announced, holding up the teddy bear. “And this one is for Adam,” she added, holding up the raccoon.

“A raccoon?” Hannibal questioned.

Abigail nodded emphatically. “Yes.”

Hannibal nodded and paid for the two toys.

Twin Cradles

Chapter Summary

The Graham-Lecters adjust to having two new family members.

Chapter Notes

Hello! Sorry for the shorter chapter. This was originally the beginning of a much longer chapter, but I felt like they didn't really connect, so I broke them into two. I'm still transcribing the longer chapter from paper to digital, but I will get it up when I can.

Will's recovery was long, but steady. When he was discharged from the hospital, Hannibal prepared a bedroom on the first floor for Will to rest in until his leg was healed. Abigail decided to play nurse with Will for ten minutes after he returned before she realized that he wasn't going to get better right away and got bored of that game. Will didn't blame her; time was a difficult concept for a child, especially when it came to long recoveries. At Hannibal's suggestion, Abigail brought in some of her toys and played with Will on his bed until he fell asleep.

Several weeks later, Mischa and Adam were allowed to come home from the hospital. Hannibal baked a small cake to celebrate, and Will helped Abigail decorate the entryway with pink and blue streamers. Winston was confused by all the excitement but became very curious when Hannibal brought in two baby carriers. Winston sniffed the two small bundles and decided he liked them, even after Adam started fussing at him. For her part, Abigail didn't know how to feel about her new siblings and went to her room.

About 10 minutes later, Hannibal gently knocked on her door. "*Zuiki*, may I come in?"

"You may," Abigail replied.

Hannibal entered and sat beside her on the floor.

"I don't know how to feel," Abigail said.

"That is okay," Hannibal validated.

"I like Mischa and Adam, but…I want to spend time with daddy like we used to," Abigail explained.

Hannibal nodded. “I think daddy and I can make that happen. It won’t be all the time, but I know daddy wants to spend time with you too.”

Abigail brightened and nuzzled against her papa.

“Would you like to help me make lunch for daddy?” Hannibal inquired. “You can take it to him when we’re done and tell him what you’ve told me. Do you want to do that, Abigail?”

She agreed and they went downstairs.

Will made a special effort in the following weeks to make time for Abigail. It was a balancing act, but Hannibal helped him to keep that balance. As the months went on, it became part of their daily routine for Abigail to have an hour of her day spent one-on-one with Will.

A Private Room

Chapter Summary

Hannibal decides to take Will out for an evening away from their children to enjoy some alone time.

Chapter Notes

Here's the rest of last chapter.

Tags for this chapter: lactation, male lactation, breastfeeding (sexual)
Yes, I did decide to include Hannibal's boob fixation from the books. If that's not your thing, stop reading after Will says, "Fuck me. Fill me."

A few terms I forgot to define until now:
* "dame" and "sire" (used in early chapters) are used like "mother" and "father" on government documents. Some older, prestigious families (like the Vergers) sometimes refer to their parents that way.
* "oma" is a gender neutral term for an omega parent, along the lines of "mom" or "mommy", can be used by pups or other adults who aren't close friends with the pup's parents (teachers, family doctors, etc.)

Abigail poked her head over the top of the nestbox where her twin siblings were supposed to be taking their afternoon nap. Adam lay on Will’s chest, mouth open in a milk drunk coma, while Mischa lay beside Will, kneading at the blanket. Will was dozing, but Abigail knew from past experience that he would wake up at the smallest sound.

“Mischa,” Abigail whispered.

Her sister looked up at the sound of her name.

“Come here,” Abigail encouraged.

Mischa and Adam were six months old now, and Mischa had started learning to crawl, while Adam sat and watched her efforts with fascination.

“Come here,” Abigail repeated.

Mischa grabbed at the blanket and crawled as close as the sloping edges of the nestbox would allow her to before Abigail had to reach in to grab at her. Unfortunately for Abigail, her arms were too short to reach, so she had to carefully climb in and boost Mischa onto the wide ledge before climbing back out and carrying Mischa out of the nest room. This was a bit challenging for Abigail because Mischa was deadweight in her arms. However, Abigail was determined and managed to get Mischa into the playroom without too many breaks.

Abigail sat Mischa down and tried to play dolls with her, but quickly became frustrated when Mischa tried to suck on her favorite doll.

“Stop it!” Abigail exclaimed.

Mischa’s blue eyes widened at her sister’s tone, and she began to fuss.

“No, no, I’m sorry!” Abigail pleaded, knowing that if Mischa started crying, they would be discovered, and she would get in trouble for wandering around during her nap time and for getting Mischa out of the nestbox.

“Abigail,” Hannibal’s voice said.

“Busted,” Abigail sighed, turning to face her papa.

Hannibal sat down beside her and picked Mischa up. He made a low rumbling sound in his chest and Mischa calmed. He kissed her forehead and looked from Mischa to Abigail, admiring the similarities and differences between the two sisters.

Abigail shared many characteristics with Will, from the same hair and eye color to their matching noses and pale complexion. It was in the smaller details that Hannibal’s genes could be found. Abigail had the same hair texture as him, same face shape and same smile.

Mischa, on the other hand, had more of Hannibal’s features; dirty blonde hair, a darker complexion, and maroon-brown eyes. From Will, she had gotten her soft curls, face, and mouth shape, and laugh. Meanwhile, Adam was a carbon copy of Will, and Hannibal adored him for it.

“I’m sorry, papa,” Abigail mumbled.

“You just wanted to play, didn’t you?” Hannibal asked.

Abigail nodded. “But Mischa isn’t any fun.”

“She will be,” Hannibal assured her. “She just needs some time to grow.”

Abigail knew her papa was right; he was right about everything.

Hannibal kissed the top of her head. “It is your nap time, *zuiki*.”

“I don’t wanna,” Abigail pouted.

“You may not want to, but it will make you feel better,” Hannibal replied. “Why don’t we take Mischa back to Adam and daddy? Then you can sit on my lap while I do some work in my office.”

Abigail nodded and followed Hannibal to the nest room. Will was still dozing, but Adam was awake and cooed happily when he saw Mischa. The twins snuggled up together and Hannibal gave Will a soft forehead kiss before taking Abigail to his office.

Hannibal sat in his chair and Abigail climbed into his lap, resting her head on his chest. She synchronized her breathing with his and was soon fast asleep. Hannibal rubbed her back while recalling a similar memory from his own childhood.

After his sister had been born, Hannibal had become very protective of her and their mother. There had been days where Hannibal couldn’t take a nap unless his head was on his papa’s chest. Now that he was older, Hannibal understood that he’d been acting on his underdeveloped alpha instincts to protect the omega members of his family. Sleeping next to his father’s beating heart acted as reassurance from the older alpha that all was well, and everyone was safe.

Hannibal softly rumbled and Abigail smiled in her sleep, knowing that she was safe with her papa. Hannibal then opened a desk drawer to review a file he’d been carefully curating since Abigail’s birth. Inside the file were the names, photos, addresses, and business cards of various pigs who posed a threat to Hannibal’s pups. He had made sure to carefully review each one to be certain that none of them had reformed before they met their unfortunate end.

Hannibal flipped through the file and mentally added two to his list of upcoming Ripper victims. The rest would die in unfortunate accidents so the FBI wouldn’t think that the Ripper suddenly had a preference for killing pedophiles.

“What are you looking at?” Will whispered, walking in with the twins asleep on both shoulders.

“Pigs for the slaughter,” Hannibal mused.

Will came over and read the file over Hannibal’s shoulder. “Have you decided when the slaughter will occur?”

Hannibal looked up at will. “Soon, *mylimasis*. I want you to be at my side.”

Will thought for a moment. “Next weekend? Clarice should be able to babysit then.”

“Are you certain?”

“I want those pigs to die,” Will said, baring his teeth.

Hannibal carefully stood, taking care to support Abigail so she didn’t wake up. He leaned in and warmly kissed Will’s lips. “My fierce omega.”

Will adjusted his hold on Mischa and Adam. “Am I still?”

Hannibal knew his answer immediately but took the time to consider Will. He could see what his mate needed, and it required carefully measured praise. Like many omega parents, Will was questioning his worthiness as a mate and his effectiveness as a parent. Three pups were a handful, even with Hannibal's help and sometimes their pups only wanted Will and wouldn't quiet until they were in his arms. This had resulted in many sleepless nights for Will.

"You give so much to our pups. They are your priority and your world," Hannibal soothed. "A lesser alpha would be jealous of how much attention you give them. I admit that even I am not above jealousy, but I delight more in seeing how you care for our pups."

"I don't have time to spend with you," Will lamented.

"We make time," Hannibal reminded him. "We have time."

Will nodded and rested his forehead against Hannibal's. "Thank you."

Hannibal rubbed their foreheads together. "Let's have a date night tonight. I will call Clarice to see if she can babysit."

"A date? Just us?" Will mewed.

"Yes, *mylimasis*," Hannibal purred.

"Yes," Will agreed.

"Go get ready," Hannibal whispered. "I will look after our pups."

Will kissed him gratefully before laying the twins in their playpen to finish their nap.

As Will left the room, Abigail stirred in Hannibal's arms. "Where are you and daddy going?" she asked, rubbing her eyes.

Hannibal kissed her forehead. "We're going on a nice date because daddy needs some bonding time with me."

"Bonding time?"

"Yes," Hannibal nodded. "I need time alone with your daddy just like you need time alone with him."

"Ooh," Abigail nodded.

"I'm going to take daddy out to dinner," Hannibal added.

"Just dinner?" Abigail asked. "We have dinner here all the time."

Hannibal thought for a moment. "I could do something else, but that would mean daddy and I wouldn't come back until tomorrow morning. Would you be okay with us being gone that long? Clarice would watch you while we're gone."

Abigail brightened. “A sleepover with Lari?”

Hannibal nodded.

“Okay!”

Hannibal called Clarice who agreed but warned him that she had homework.

“Senior year is kicking my butt,” she explained.

When Hannibal hung up, Will had just gotten into the shower, giving Hannibal time to pack their overnight bags, and put them in the car without Will noticing. Abigail was waiting for Hannibal when he came back into his bedroom with a smile on her face.

“I picked out your suit!” she announced.

“Just like Will, I can never entirely predict her.”

Abigail proudly showed Hannibal a navy suit and matching tie with a goldleaf paisley pattern. “How did I do?”

“Perfectly,” Hannibal praised.

Abigail went to play while Hannibal got dressed. When he’d finished, Will was out of the shower and standing in front of his closet, pondering his outfit.

“You look nice,” he commented when Hannibal came in.

“Thank you,” Hannibal replied. “Abigail assisted me.”

Will drank in the navy suit. “Dress me.”

Hannibal’s eyes gleamed and he took Will’s place in front of his closet.

Since the birth of the twins, Will had begun to favor loose fitting clothing. Maternity shirt dresses and leggings now dotted his wardrobe, which gave Hannibal new opportunities to experiment with Will’s style. He selected a navy shirt dress to match his suit; a simple ribbon tied above Will’s waist and buttons from collar to hem offered Hannibal a delicious temptation. Hannibal paired the dress with a pair of black leggings and loafers with gold accents.

Hannibal handed the ensemble to Will and sat on the bed to watch him dress. Will’s stomach had retained a soft layer of fat, and his pectorals were still swollen with milk, giving him a decidedly feminine silhouette that Hannibal adored.

Will put on a pair of underwear and a sports bra to flatten his chest before putting on the leggings and dress Hannibal had chosen for him. “What do you think?”

“You outshine the stars, Will,” Hannibal replied.

Will smiled and interlocked his arm with Hannibal's, leading him out into the living room.

Abigail squealed with delight when she saw them and made them play fancy restaurant until Clarice arrived and Abigail began to have second thoughts about letting her parents go out to dinner. Hannibal validated her concerns and offered to call off the date. Abigail thought about it and decided that they should go.

"You and daddy need your bonding time," she said.

Hannibal gave her a kiss. "Thank you, *zuiki*."

Will hugged and kissed Abigail while Hannibal went over a few last-minute details with Clarice before they got into Hannibal's Bentley and drove to the restaurant.

Will and Hannibal rode in comfortable silence to the restaurant and ate without saying much. Hannibal ordered a bottle of wine, and they savored it along with their meal.

"This was lovely," Will purred as they walked back to the car.

"The night isn't over just yet," Hannibal informed him.

Will frowned. "It's getting late, Hannibal. We should get back."

"I booked a hotel room for us tonight," Hannibal explained.

Will stopped in his tracks in surprise. "You did?"

"Clarice has already agreed to stay the night," Hannibal added.

Will considered this. He hadn't spent a night away from home since the twins had been born. "Why not?"

Hannibal smiled and helped Will into the car. He drove to a deluxe hotel and paid for valet parking. After they checked-in, they went up to the second nicest suite.

Hannibal opened the door for Will, revealing a large room with a king-sized mattress covered in pillows, a large bathroom containing a bathtub with jets and a view of the city. A complementary bottle of champagne was chilling on a small table near the tub.

Will covered his mouth in awe as he stared out the window. "Hannibal, come here," he said, removing his hands.

Hannibal silently approached and wrapped his arms around Will's waist, pulling their bodies flush. He nuzzled at the fading claim mark on Will's shoulder. "What does my mate need?" he whispered in Will's ear.

Will shivered. "You. I need your attention. I need your cock, alpha, *please*."

Hannibal growled possessively and Will felt his mate's cock swell against his thigh.

“Fuck me,” Will moaned. “Fill me.”

Hannibal grabbed handfuls of Will’s dress and pulled it around Will’s hips. Will pressed his ass against Hannibal’s crotch, making Hannibal’s pants even tighter. Hannibal’s nimble fingers unbuttoned the top of Will’s dress before sliding under the fabric of Will’s sports bra to cup his chest. Will gasped as Hannibal’s thumbs brushed over the sensitive nipples. Milk drops budded as Will’s nipples hardened. Hannibal caught a drop on his thumb and carefully brought it to his lips. He moaned and Will shivered, feeling the rumble reverberate between their bodies.

“Do you…like that?” Will asked.

Hannibal nodded.

Will took that information in, and an idea formed in his head. “Are you hungry, Hannibal?” Will slowly turned to face his mate. “Would you like some more milk?”

Hannibal’s eyes darkened with desire.

Will slowly backed into the bedroom while making burning eye contact. He slowly finished unbuttoning his dress and removed his bra before propping himself up against the headboard. He cupped his chest, feeling the weight of them, all while maintaining eye contact with Hannibal.

“Come here,” Will beckoned. “I’ve been denying you, haven’t I?”

It took all of Hannibal’s remaining self-control to walk instead of launching himself at Will.

“Come here, pup,” Will encouraged. “Come and get your milk.”

Hannibal crawled across the bed to Will and ran his tongue over Will’s left nipple, causing Will to shiver before Hannibal latched on.

Will’s eyelids fluttered and slick dampened his underwear. It felt different from feeding his pups, although Will knew the mechanics were the same. There was a technique to what Hannibal was doing and Will loved it.

“So hungry,” Will moaned. “Mmm, but there’s plenty of oma’s milk for my favorite pup.”

Hannibal groaned in approval.

“I want you to be a big, strong alpha,” Will continued.

Hannibal fondled Will’s right breast, stimulating it before latching onto it. Will rubbed Hannibal’s back and cooed at him.

“That’s right, Hannibal. Drink up. Oma has plenty of milk for you,” Will said, taking Hannibal’s hand and guiding it under the waistband of Will’s underwear. “I’m overflowing.”

Hannibal pulled off and rested his head between Will’s soft globes, panting.

“Such a greedy little pup,” Will teased. “You want my milk all to yourself, don’t you?”

Hannibal nodded.

Will kissed the top of Hannibal’s head. “Dig in. Only you get my special milk.”

Hannibal moaned and pulled at Will’s clothes until he was completely naked. Will grabbed a pillow and rolled over, offering his slick hole for Hannibal’s consumption. A moment later, Hannibal’s face was pressed between Will’s butt cheeks and Will was moaning uncontrollably.

“Y—Yes!” Will managed. “So…good!”

Hannibal continued to enthusiastically lick and slurp at Will’s glistening hole until Will came, staining the sheets under him. Hannibal rolled Will over and licked up the mess.

“So…good,” Will repeated.

“You were delicious, oma,” Hannibal rasped.

Will blushed and Hannibal maneuvered Will’s limp body to spoon him.

“I liked that more than I expected,” Will admitted after a few minutes.

“Thank you for indulging me,” Hannibal replied.

Will nuzzled him. “You’re welcome.”

Hannibal held Will for a few more minutes before scooping him up and taking Will into the bathroom. He sat Will beside the tub and began running a warm bath, complete with bubbles. When the tub was full, Hannibal dimmed the lights, lifted Will into the tub, and stripped down to join him.

Will leaned against Hannibal’s chest and let his alpha take control. Hannibal spoke softly and placed warm kisses on Will’s shoulder as he washed Will’s body.

Will slowly came back to himself and let one of his hands slide between Hannibal’s thighs. He located Hannibal’s cock and guided it to his still loose hole. Will seated himself and Hannibal grabbed his hips to hold Will in place while he thrust into him.

“Such a good alpha,” Will praised. “You take such good care of me; now, taking what you need from me!”

Hannibal’s cock swelled at Will’s words, stretching him wide.

“Big, powerful, alpha,” Will continued.

Hannibal picked up his pace and water sloshed over the sides of the tub.

“So *big*,” Will moaned, “and strong.”

Hannibal's pace redoubled and Will was reduced to a moaning mess as Hannibal's cock struck his g-spot again and again.

"Cum for me," Will managed.

Hannibal slammed his cock deep inside Will twice before his knot finally popped. He fell back against the edge of the tub to rest. Will turned on the tap to run fresh water before opening the drain.

After Hannibal's knot deflated, he and Will cleaned themselves up and changed into their pajamas. Hannibal called the front desk and apologized before asking for fresh sheets on the bed. A few minutes later, housekeeping came up and remade the bed. Once they were alone again, Will approached Hannibal and rested his head on Hannibal's shoulder.

"I needed this," Will admitted.

Hannibal rubbed his back.

"Did you enjoy yourself?"

"I did, *mylimasis,*" Hannibal assured him.

"Good," Will said. "Just know that I'm not going to breastfeed you regularly."

Hannibal chuckled. "I suspected as much."

Will rolled his eyes and yawned. They climbed into bed and slept soundly for the rest of the night.

Astronomy Wing

Chapter Summary

Adam Graham-Lecter learns a few lessons about the world, himself, and his dad.

Chapter Notes

Adam is canonically autistic and I did my best to portray that experience in this chapter. I am autistic ADHD, so I drew from some of my own experiences, but I am not a monolith, so if there is anything that I have a blind spot for that should be fixed, please let me know in the comments.

Adam walked into the kitchen and frowned. It was breakfast time, but no one was in the kitchen. Daddy sometimes slept in, but never papa. Had Adam slept in and missed breakfast? Adam's chest tightened and he looked up at the clock on the stove. The numbers were right for breakfast, so where was everyone?

The tight feeling in Adam's chest grew worse. This happened whenever he got what daddy called "big emotions". Adam made his hands into fists and closed his eyes. Papa had told him to take big breaths when he got big emotions to help him calm down so he could think better.

One. Two. Three. Four. Five.

Adam's fists relaxed.

One. Two. Three. Four. Five.

"Adam?" papa's voice asked.

Adam opened his eyes. Papa was standing in the doorway still wearing his pajamas.

"You're up early," papa observed.

"I am?" Adam frowned.

Papa looked at the clock. "It didn't change," he muttered.

"Why would it change?" Adam asked. "Don't clocks usually do that?"

Papa went over to the clock. “Today they are supposed to change more than normal. I’ll tell you why in a moment; I would like to fix the clock first.”

Adam covered his ears as papa pressed the buttons to fix the clock. Adam didn’t’ like the noise the buttons made when you pressed them.

“All done,” papa said gently. “Thank you for letting me take care of that.”

Adam removed his hands from his ears.

“Today begins Daylight Savings Time,” papa explained. “We set our clockc back an hour so we can have more hours of daylight in the winter.”

Adam nodded then asked, “Why?”

Papa smiled and took Adam into his study. Adam got to sit on his lap while papa opened a big book and explained the earth’s journey around the sun and how it was also spinning on its axis. Papa then demonstrated all of this by having Adam hold a globe and move around an uncovered lightbulb. Adam liked the way papa explained things to him, especially when those things were about space. Adam loved space.

“Good morning,” daddy yawned as he walked into the study.

“Good morning,” Adam echoed.

“You’re up early,” daddy commented.

Adam explained how he had gotten up and no one else was awake, but then papa was, and papa had told him about Daylight Saving Time. Daddy listened and nodded his head to show that he was listening.

“You’ve learned a lot this morning,” daddy smiled.

Adam smiled back and nodded.

“Adam, since everyone is starting to wake up,” papa suggested, “why don’t you help me make breakfast for everyone?”

Adam’s face lit up and he and papa went into the kitchen. They made pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, and hard-boiled eggs for Adam because he didn’t like how rubbery scrambled eggs were.

By the time everything was made, Mischa and Abby were awake. Papa asked them to set the table while he made fresh coffee for himself and daddy. Adam helped put food on the plates before pappa and daddy carried them into the dining room.

Adam ate his pancakes, then his eggs, and finally his sausage. He took his morning vitamins, finished his milk, then asked to be excused. Papa excused him and Adam took his dishes into the kitchen and put them in the sink.

Daddy came in to get more coffee and reminded Adam that they were going to see a doctor the next day and so Adam would need to be ready to go at this time tomorrow.

Adam wasn't sure why he was going to see a doctor. He wasn't sick. He'd even asked daddy and papa if he was sick and they'd both told him that he wasn't. Adam was going to ask more questions about his doctor's visit when Mischa came into the kitchen and asked if Adam wanted to play. Since Adam liked playing with his sister, he decided to ask daddy more questions later, and went to her room.

Some time later, papa brought them a snack because it wasn't lunch time, but their tummies were hungry because they thought it was.

"What are you playing?" papa asked.

"Enchanted forest," Mischa explained. "I'm a princess and Adam is all the animals in the forest."

Papa nodded. "Which animal are you right now, Adam?"

"I'm a bear," Adam replied before roaring to demonstrate.

"Ferocious," papa praised.

"You're late for tea," Mischa told Adam.

"I will leave you to your mid-morning tea," papa said before leaving.

After lunch, it was quiet time. Adam curled up in his blanket fort with Pluto, his stuffed raccoon, and closed his eyes. He didn't mean to take a nap, but it happened, and later, daddy woke him up by rubbing his back.

"Hi," Adam yawned.

"Hi," daddy replied.

Adam curled up next to daddy. He liked doing that because daddy was warm, soft, and he made Adam feel safe.

Daddy pet Adam's curls and they snuggled for a while. They heard papa remind Abby that it was her turn to help him make dinner, which meant they had about an hour before dinnertime. Daddy and Adam went to Mischa's room and all three played a board game until dinner was ready.

They ate, then it was bath time, followed by read aloud time. Papa was reaching them French, so he read from a French picture book. Adam liked how French sounded.

When papa had read two stories, it was Adam and Mischa's bedtime. Since Abby was three years older, she got to stay up an hour longer.

Daddy gave Adam and Plute a goodnight kiss and a big hug before he went to Mischa's room, and papa came in to kiss Adam goodnight. Papa turned off the light and Adam's ceiling softly glowed. Shortly after Adam had become interested in space papa had painted the ceiling to look like the night sky. He'd even added glow-in-the-dark paint to the stars so they could glow. Adam smiled and closed his eyes.

***

Will fidgeted. He knew this was just a formal process so Adam could have documentation when he started school, but he still wasn't sure it was the right thing. He saw so much of his younger self in Adam, and he didn't want his pup growing up the way he had; undiagnosed for years and certain that *something* was wrong with him. Adam didn't deserve that, so why did Will feel sick to his stomach?

"Will?"

Hannibal's warm hand rested on his knee.

"We're doing the right thing…aren't we?" Will whispered.

Hannibal moved his hand, so it was wrapped around Will's shoulders. "Knowing will help Adam understand his world."

"But should we be doing this *now*?" Will pressed. "He's so young."

"Adam is a curious pup," Hannibal replied warmly, "I want to give him the answers he seeks."

Will nuzzled Hannibal's throat and breathed in his alpha's musk.

A few minutes later, the doctor had one final conversation with them while Adam fidgeted and tugged at Will's sleeve, ready to go.

They were almost home when Adam asked; "Is something wrong with me?"

Will's chest ached and he glanced at Hannibal. His mate touched his hand and gave him a meaningful look. Taking a breath, Will turned around in the passenger seat to look at Adam. "No, Adam. There is nothing wrong with you. Your brain is like mine. We think and see the world in a different way from other people. That can be hard sometimes, but it's what makes us who we are."

Adam slowly nodded. "So, I'm not sick?"

"No, Adam," Will softly smiled.

When they got home, Hannibal and Will took all three of their children into the study and had their first talk with them about autism. Hannibal simplified the neuroscience, while Will talked about his own struggles and coping skills he'd developed.

“I can do most things without help, but sometimes I need to take breaks because too much is going on,” Will explained. He knew this was highly simplistic, but he was also talking to two three-year-olds and a six-year-old.

When Will and Hannibal finished, they answered a few questions before Adam asked; “Can I go play? My head hurts from learning too much.”

“Of course,” Hannibal replied.

Will sat back in his chair as his children ran off to play. “I feel like I said everything wrong.”

“You did well,” Hannibal validated. “As they grow, we’ll revisit this and add complexity. For today, giving Adam the language his needs to understand himself was enough.”

“We put a label on him,” Will muttered.

Hannibal met Will’s eyes. “We have, but we have also given him the language he needs so he can feel less alone.”

“Like I did,” Will added.

Hannibal nodded. “Being autistic and an omega will make Adam’s life difficult, but he has us to support him.”

“He’s an omega?”

“He and Mischa both,” Hannibal said with certainty.

Will rubbed his face. He’d noticed omega tendencies in the twins, but he hadn’t wanted to label them prematurely. But if Hannibal was certain, Will knew it must be true.

“They have us, Will,” Hannibal affirmed. “We will look after them.”

***

Adam sat on the floor beside Mischa. They each had a coloring book open in front of them and a box of crayons between them. Mischa’s tongue stuck out as she colored in a princess with the concentration of a Renaissance artist. Adam was channeling Jackson Pollack, letting the colors flow from his crayon as he tried to make sense of what papa and daddy had told him. Daddy called this “chewing on things”, but Adam didn’t know why. He didn’t like chewing on things other than food.

A rustling of paper pulled Adam out of his thoughts, and he looked over at Mischa.

“Quiet time?” she asked in sign language.

All of the Graham-Lecter children had been taught sign language from birth to the point where it was more of a first language to them than English.

“Thinking,” Adam signed back.

“Me too.” Mischa grabbed a blank piece of paper and a purple crayon. A princess took shape, but she was sad. A blue astronaut took shape sat beside her. Mischa held up the drawing to Adam, who grabbed a blank piece of paper of his own and drew the blue astronaut surrounded by non-astronaut stick figures. Mischa frowned and drew her princess hugging the astronaut with a pink heart above them. She then drew the princess scaring away the blue stick figures, which made Adam laugh.

Mischa made a heart with her hands and held it up to Adam. He mirrored her heart back at her.

“You’re still you,” Mischa said.

“I am, but I’m different too,” Adam nodded. “Like an astronaut on earth. Or…” he thought for a moment to come up with an analogy she’d understand, “or like Cinderella going to the ball in her rags. She wouldn’t have fit in.”

Mischa slowly nodded. “I think I get it…?”

“I’m not sure I do either,” Adam validated.

“Want to play explorers?” Misha asked.

“Yes!” Adam nodded. “Can I be an astronaut?”

Mischa thought for a moment. “We both can.”

They ran off to get their space helmets, made from only the finest cardboard boxes money could buy, with expertly cut holes for them to see through. With their helmets secure, Captain Adam and Princess Lieutenant Mischa moon bounced around a strange new planet where they met two friendly giants who offered them a strange food called “lunch”, which they discovered was delicious.

After finishing “lunch”, Captain Adam and Princess Lieutenant Mischa met a smaller giant who asked to join them. After some thought, Captain Adam agreed to let Doctor Abby join the team. Together, the three of them explored far and wide. They had just discovered a furry creature called “Winston” and were playing anti-gravity fetch with him when they received an urgent message from home base telling them that dinner was ready, and they needed to come home immediately. The trio reluctantly said goodbye to Winston before getting in their spaceship to go back to home base and report their findings to the highest authorities in the galaxy, King Papa and Queen Daddy.

Graham-Lecter Music Hall

Chapter Summary

Mischa discovers her love of music and dance, and how best to frighten Hannibal Lecter.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will heard a familiar tune being plucked out on the piano and frowned. He knew of only three people who played piano in the house; himself, Abigial, and Hannibal (who preferred the harpsichord). Abigial was at her piano lesson and Hannibal was going to pick her up on his way home from work. So who was playing?

Will followed the rich sounds of the piano to the doorway of the room it was kept in. He poked his head in and found Mischa sitting on the bench, her small legs dangling in the air. Will watched as she brought her index finger down heavily on one of the keys without producing a sound. She repeated the motion, and this time was able to press the weighted key heavily enough to produce a sound.

As Mischa played, she vocalized the melody she was trying to play, occasionally accompanied by a dull thump on the thick rug. Wondering what could be causing that sound, Will stepped into the room and found Adam wearing a pair of Mischa's leggings and one of her dress-up tutus dancing around. Adam spotted Will and stopped.

"No," Mischa scolded, "you keep dancing until the song is done."

"Hi, daddy," Adam quietly greeted.

Mischa turned her head and her cheeks warmed with embarrassment. "Are you mad at me?"

Will's eyebrows pulled together. "Why would I be mad, Mischa?"

"I didn't ask permission to play the piano," Mischa explained.

Will sat next to her on the bench. "You were playing very well."

"I've been watching Abby practice," Mischa admitted.

"You'll have to show papa when he gets home," Will encouraged. "He'll be very impressed."

Mischa looked up at him. "He will?"

“He will,” Will promised.

Mischa’s eyes glittered. “I’m playing *Nutcracker*. Larry showed us the movie when she babysat us last weekend and Adam wanted to be the prince.”

“You did?” Will asked Adam encouragingly.

“I’m not a prince, I’m the Nutcracker!” Adam insisted.

“Who turns into a prince!” Mischa insisted.

“Mischa,” Will cautioned, “let Adam be the Nutcracker if he wants to be.”

“Okay,” Mischa sighed.

Will kissed the top of her head.

“Play it again, Mischa?” Adam requested.

She nodded and began to peck out a tune which Will now recognized as “Waltz of the Flowers”. As Mischa played, Adam danced around the room with an absentminded smile on his face.

“Do you like dancing, Adam?” Will asked when Mischa had finished playing.

Adam nodded. “It’s like one big stim.”

Will made a thoughtful noise. Stimming helped Adam burn off excess energy when he was excited or overwhelmed. Will glanced at them. “Would you two like to learn ballet?”

“Really?” Mischa exclaimed.

“You mean it?” Adam breathed.

Will nodded. “I’ll talk to papa about it, if you two want to take lessons.”

“What if one of us doesn’t?” Adam asked.

“Ballet can be something one of you does but not the other,” Will said.

Adam nodded. “I was just checking, because I think I want to, but I didn’t want Mischa to have to stop if I decided that I didn’t like it anymore.”

“That’s very considerate, Adam,” Will praised.

In the hallway, Winston barked twice before the back door opened.

“We have returned,” Hannibal called.

Mischa and Adam’s eyes lit up.

“Do you two want to surprise papa and Abby?” Will asked in a loud whisper.

The twins nodded and Will left the room to get Hannibal and Abigail.

“Where are Mischa and Adam?” Hannibal asked when Will approached.

“They have a surprise for you and Abigail,” Will explained.

Abigial looked up from the floor, where she sat taking off her boots. “What kind of surprise?”

“We will have to find out,” Hannibal mused.

Will led the way. When he opened the door, Mischa and Adam rushed to give Hannibal a hug before returning to their spots.

“Sit down,” Mischa commanded from the piano stool. “…Please.”

Will, Hannibal, and Mischa sat, and Will noticed that Hannibal’s eyes were locked on Mischa.

With some difficulty, Mischa began to play while Adam began to dance. Hannibal’s eyes moved from Mischa to Adam and back as a proud smile pulled at his lips. When Mischa finished playing, Adam bowed, and Hannibal gave them a standing ovation.

“*Širdelė*,” Hannibal breathed, “where did you learn how to play?”

“By watching Abby practice,” Mischa bashfully replied.

Hannibal glanced at Abigial who nodded. “She likes to sit next to me.”

Hannibal then turned his gaze to Adam. “You were so graceful, *mažius*.”

Adam blushed. “Daddy says that Mischa and I can take ballet lessons, if we want to.”

“Only if it’s okay with papa,” Will added.

Hannibal glanced from his mate to their pups. “Why would I be against it?”

Mischa and Adam squealed with delight.

“Can I learn how to play piano too?” Mischa asked.

“I will teach you for now,” Hannibal promised. “Most piano teachers don’t take students as young as you.”

“But I can play,” Mischa insisted.

Hannibal knelt to be closer to her. “You can, Mischa, but not every three-year-old can. Most teachers are looking for students Abigial’s age. You can start learning now, and when you’re Abigial’s age, you can show your teacher how well you can play.”

“Okay,” Mischa agreed.

In the following weeks, the Graham-Lecter house became filled with even more music than before. Mischa and Abigial took turns practicing piano, and Adam played music in his room to help him practice for dance class. When he knew a movement perfectly, he moved with elegance and grace. Whenever Mischa wasn’t practicing piano, she joined him.

As the Christmas season rolled around, Hannibal surprised everyone with tickets to the Baltimore Ballet’s production of *The Nutcracker*. On the night of the performance, the Graham-Lecters arrived in suits and dresses. Mischa wore a soft pink dress with white lace, which she insisted made her look like Clara. Abigail wore a dark green crushed velvet dress with gold accents. Adam matched Hannibal’s black tie suit, while Will opted for black suit pants and a structured high-low top with long sleeves.

“I don’t believe it,” a woman’s voice gasped. “Dr. Lecter.”

Hannibal turned and smiled. “Mrs. Komeda, it has been too long.”

A female alpha with a short bob and fierce eyes approached him. She wore an elegant red and gold dress cut in a more youthful way than Will would have expected for a woman her age.

“Is this your family?” Mrs. Komeda asked.

Hannibal placed a hand on the small of Will’s back. “Mrs. Komeda, may I present my mate, Will Graham. Will, Mrs. Komeda.”

Will politely nodded to her.

“Well, I never,” Mrs. Komeda mused. “Mr. Graham, you have quite the husband and mate. Half of Boston has fought over him. And those are the ones I know about.”

Will smirked. “I would guess the number is closer to half of New England.”

Mrs. Komeda smiled approvingly. “At least. Now, who are these delightful children?”

Adam moved behind Will’s legs while Mischa glanced up at Hannibal and Abigial looked at Mrs. Komeda.

“I’m Abigial Graham-Lecter,” she said. “Pleased to meet you.”

Mrs. Komeda politely returned her greeting. “You have something of your ama’s fierceness in you. I approve.”

Abigial straightened her shoulders with pride.

Seeing that Mrs. Komeda was safe to approach, Mischa stepped forward. “I am Mischa Graham-Lecter. It’s nice to meet you, Mrs. Komeda. Your dress is really pretty.”

“I admire yours as well,” Mrs. Komeda replied. Her attention then fell on Adam, who was still watching her from behind Will’s legs. “I am Mrs. Komeda. I promise my bark is worse

than my bite, little one."

"I'm Adam."

"Adam," Mrs. Komeda repeated warmly. "You look just like your oma."

Adam blushed and looked up at Will.

"Why don't we go find out seats?" Will asked Adam.

Adam nodded and Will took his hand.

"Abigail, Mischa, go with daddy," Hannibal encouraged, wanted a moment alone with his old friend.

The girls waved goodbye and went with Will without a fuss.

"They're beautiful pups," Mrs. Komeda praised. "Is the oldest an alpha?"

"I believe so," Hannibal nodded.

"She's going to be as sought after as you were," Mrs. Komeda predicted. "You *must* let me host their debutant balls when they come of age. The pups of Hannibal Lecter deserve a proper introduction of Baltimore society."

"It will be some years before that," Hannibal reminded her.

"Of course!" Mrs. Komeda exclaimed. "I only meant that I would be willing to do it when the time comes."

"Of course," Hannibal nodded. He spoke with her for a few more minutes before joining his family at their seats. Mischa was wiggling with excitement, Abigail was looking around in awe, and Adam was looking over Will's program while Will read it aloud.

The performance began and all three Graham-Lecter children were mesmerized. When intermission came, all three were too excited to leave their seats, but Hannibal insisted that they take a bathroom break.

Mischa stood up, instantly became aware of how full her little bladder was and took off running. Hannibal's heart pounded in his chest as he grabbed Adam and Abigail's hands and tried to push through the crowd after his pup. This was easier said than done and by the time Hannibal reached the lobby, Mischa was nowhere to be found.

"Hannibal?" Will's voice came from behind him.

Hannibal turned. "Mischa…."

Their eyes met and Will forced himself to take a breath. "I'll take Adam and Abigail; you wait here for her."

Hannibal nodded and moved to the side of the lobby. His eyes scanned the room like a lifeguard on duty. He noticed Mrs. Komeda approaching him, but he ignored her. Mischa had to be here somewhere and the storm that was his alpha would not calm until his pup was in his arms once again.

“Hannibal,” Mrs. Komeda said.

He softly growled in warning.

“Oh, my, what’s happened?” she exclaimed.

Hannibal’s eyes kept scanning the room.

“Hannibal, you’re worrying me,” Mrs. Komeda said.

“Mischa,” he managed to say.

“Yes, papa?”

Hannibal froze then finally looked in Mrs. Komeda’s direction. Standing at the older woman’s side was Mischa, safe and sound.

“Oh, *širdelė*,” Hannibal breathed in relief. He knelt and held his daughter close.

“Papa?” she asked.

“Don’t run away like that again, *širdelė*, do you understand?”

“Yes, papa,” Mischa nodded. She looked up at Mrs. Komeda in confusion. “I went to the bathroom and saw Mrs. K when I came out. She said that we should wait for you and daddy.”

Hannibal looked at Mrs. Komeda. “Thank you.”

“Of course,” she warmly smiled.

Hannibal rose to his feed as Will, Adam, and Abigail found him again. Will made sure to scent his mate and softly purr to soothe him before they returned to their seats for the second act.

Later that night, as Will was tucking Mischa into bed, she asked; “Why was papa so scared when he couldn’t find me?”

Will sat on her bed. “Papa had a little sister who was also named Mischa.”

“I remember that,” Mischa nodded.

“Well, papa’s sister disappeared, and she didn’t come back,” Will cautiously explained. “When papa couldn’t see you because you ran ahead, papa worried that he wouldn’t see you again.”

Mischa frowned. “Oh.”

“But we found you again, and papa is very happy to have you back,” Will added.

Mischa nodded and gave him a hug.

“Goodnight, Mischa,” Will whispered, kissing the top of her head.

“Night-night, daddy.”

When Hannibal came in to kiss her goodnight, Mischa softly apologized for running ahead of him and promised not to do it again.

“Thank you, *širdelė*,” Hannibal said. He hugged her and gave her a kiss before tucking her in. “Sleep well, Mischa.”

Chapter End Notes

Hannibal's nickname for Mischa, širdelė, means little heart

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!